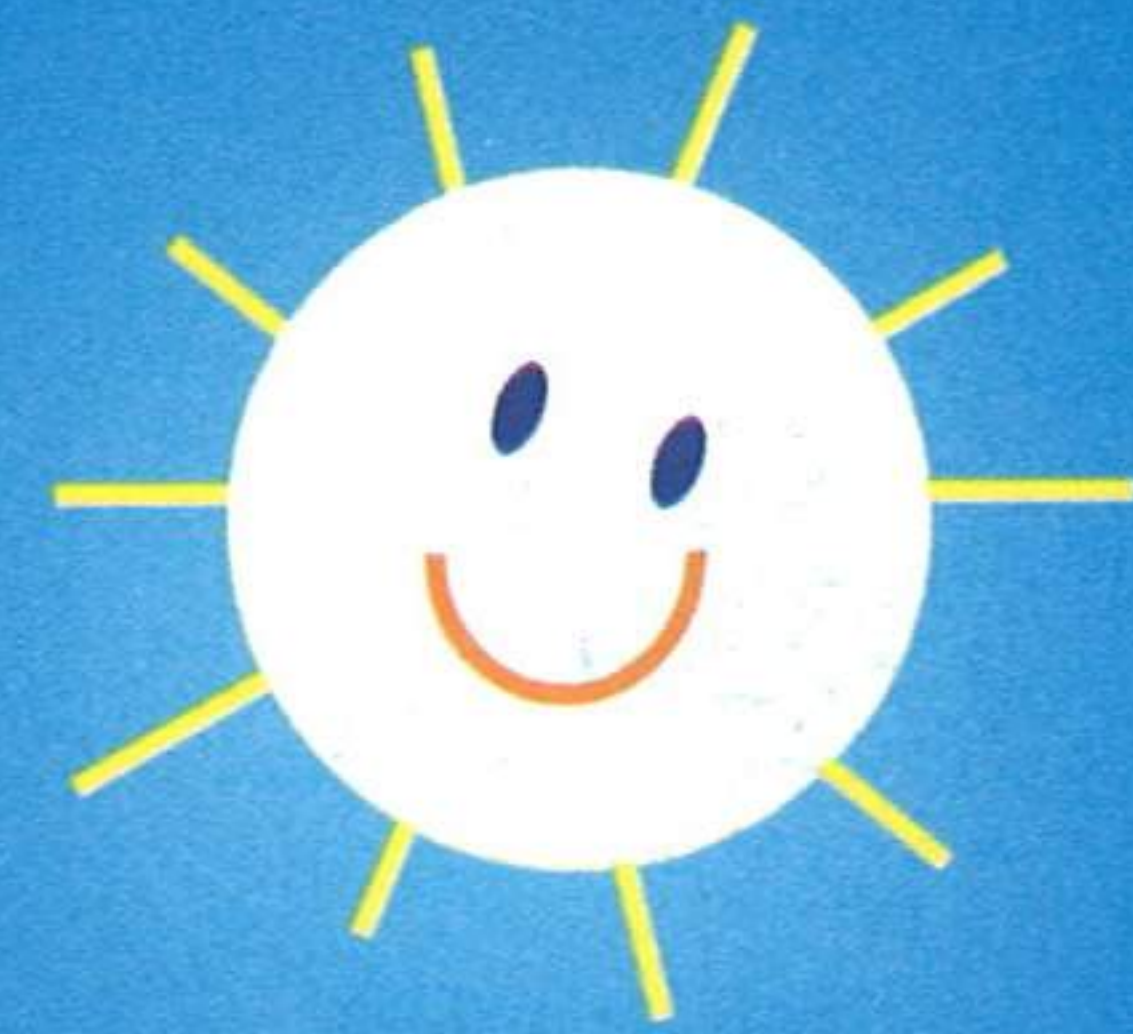
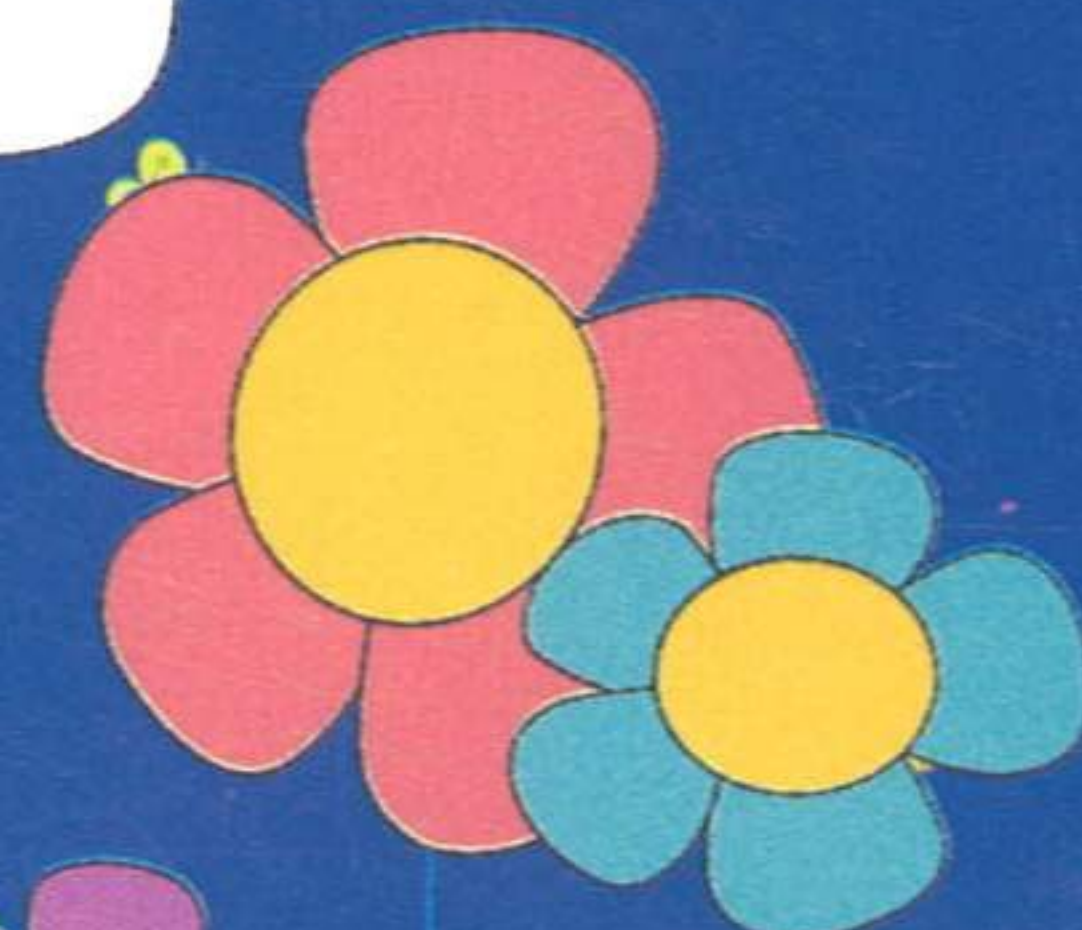
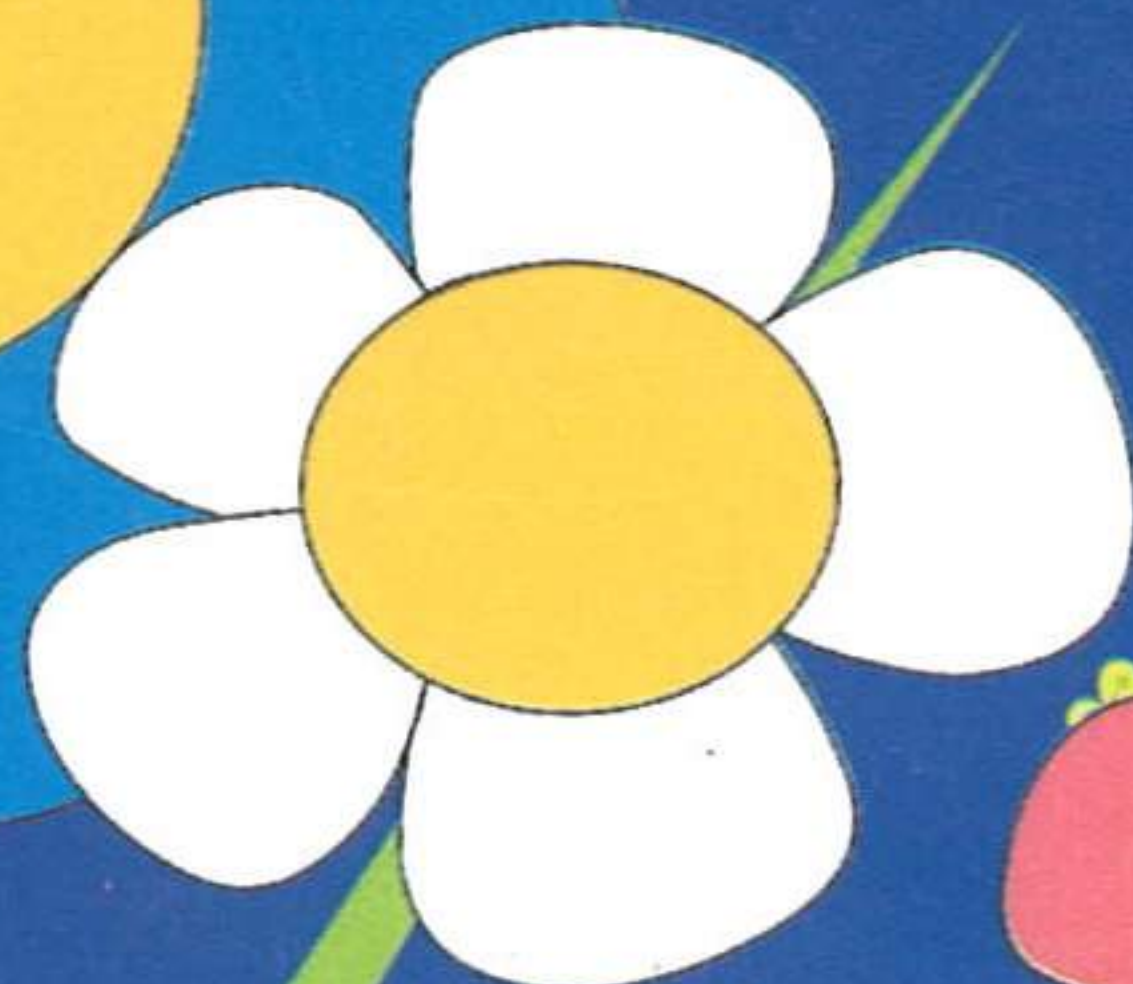




**Orthodox Syrian Sunday School  
Association of the East**  
(Outside Kerala Region)



**TEXT BOOK**  
CLASS 6





**ORTHODOX SYRIAN SUNDAY SCHOOL  
ASSOCIATION OF THE EAST**

**TEXT BOOK  
CLASS - VI**



**FOR STUDENTS OF  
OUTSIDE KERALA REGION**

*Published by:*

**OSSAE (Outside Kerala Region)  
Regional Head Quarters  
St. Thomas Orthodox Theological Seminary  
Brahmni P. O., Kalmeshwar, Nagpur - 441501. India  
E-mail: okrsundayschool@rediffmail.com  
Web: www.ossae-okr.org**



ORTHODOX SYRIAN SUNDAY SCHOOL  
ASSOCIATION OF THE EAST

TEXT BOOK  
CLASS - VI



**TEXT BOOK CLASS - VI  
(OSSAE - OKR)**

**English**

**For private use only**

*First Edition in September 2009*

*Published By*

OSSAE (Outside Kerala Region)

Regional Head Quarters

St. Thomas Orthodox Theological Seminary

P. O. Brahmni, Kalmeshwar, Nagpur - 441 501

Phone: 07118-271696, 271991

Copies: 5000

Price: Rs. 40.00

*Printed At:*

Alois Graphics, Kottayam

Tel: 0481-2569847



## FORWORD

I introduce this book to the students and teachers of Class VI with much pleasure and satisfaction. The present volume is the result of hard work for a couple of months. The basic principles of this text book are the following:

1. Keeping in mind the fact that the teachers as well as the children should not be over burdened, we have limited the lessons to 25, because none of the Sunday Schools in the Diaspora is able to cover more than these in a year.
2. The lessons are distributed among various disciplines like Old Testament, New Testament, Church History, Worship, Faith of the Church and Current topics.
3. More emphasis is given to the continuity of the topic and the progress of thought. The contents are finalized after considering the age of the child; we have tried our level best to make the lessons child-centered.
4. The language is kept as simple as possible so as to make it compatible to the learning capacity of the children.
5. We have included a lot of exercises at the end of each lesson to make the classroom alive. We welcome the teachers who are creative and can initiate more activities.

The class room should be a place where the teacher and the children work together; while the learners will find the lessons more informative, the teachers will feel their task easy. The teachers are expected to do some home work before coming to the class room. They have to guide the children in such a way that the latter will enjoy learning and their intellectual curiosity will be



aroused. While learning each lesson the children need to develop a commitment first to God and then to the Church.

This text book is sponsored by St. George Orthodox Sunday School of Abu Dhabi. I would like to thank the Vicar and Head Master for their commitment to the edification of our children. The basic texts for most of the lessons in this book were prepared by a team of teachers from the Delhi Diocese I am thankful to Fr. Saji Abraham, the Diocesan Director, for supervising the project. However, these lessons were thoroughly checked and edited so that they suit our objectives. I do appreciate the STOTS family in general and Dr. Ipe Varghese in particular for the laborious work in bringing the book to its present form. I am thankful to the OSSAE executive committee for giving us the permission to publish the book at Nagpur itself.

Nagpur  
Feast of Transfiguration, 2009

**Fr. Reji Mathew**  
(OKR Director)

*Lessons contributed by:*

- ***A team of teachers from Delhi Diocese***
- ***Fr. Dr. Reji Mathew***
- ***Dr. Ipe Varghese***



## CONTENTS

<b>Unit I: Old Testament</b>	<b>Page No.</b>
1. Judges - the leaders of Israel (Deborah, Gideon, Samson)	7
2. Samuel the Judge and the Prophet	14
3. Saul the first King	19
4. Strengthening God: Story of David	24
5. Solomon's Wisdom	29
6. Heavenly Guidance for Israel: Prophet Elijah	33
7. God protects his people from enemies: Prophet Elisha	36
<b>Unit II: New Testament</b>	
8. The Divine Call and Discipleship of Christ	39
9. The First Disciples: Simon, Andrew, James and John	42
10. The First Disciples: Levi, Philip, Nathaniel	47
11. The Cost of Discipleship: The Young Rich Man	50
12. The Cost of Discipleship: Zachaeus	53
13. St. Thomas a Disciple of Christ	56
14. Paul a Disciple of Christ	62
15. Discipleship- Gains and Pains	68



**Unit III: Church History**

16.	St. Thomas Christians and Portuguese mission	72
17.	Synod of Diamper	76
18.	Coonen Cross Oath	79

**Unit IV: Dogma**

19.	Sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation	82
-----	--	----

**Unit V: Worship**

20.	Hymns	87
21.	Prayers	89

**Unit VI: Our Fathers**

22.	Ignatius of Antioch	90
23.	Irenaeus of Lyon	94
24.	Vattasseril Thirumeni	98

**Unit VII: Current Issues**

25.	Poverty in India	104
-----	------------------	-----



LESSON 1

**JUDGES – THE LEADERS OF ISRAEL  
(DEBORAH, GIDEON, SAMSON)**

(Judg. 4, 6-8, 13-16)

**Israelites in Canaan**

In the previous classes we learnt how God liberated Israelites from their slavery in Egypt and brought them to Canaan. The twelve tribes of Israel had settled in Canaan. After the death of Joshua the Israelites were virtually without a leader. They did not follow the commands that God had given them to follow strictly. They intermarried with other races. They forgot their real God Yahweh and started worshipping idols of Bal and other pagan Gods, thus provoking God's anger. Whenever they rebelled against God, He punished them and they were persecuted by other nations. When Israel repented God selected Judges to liberate and lead them.

**Judges: The Leaders of Israel**

It was Moses and Joshua who lead the Israelites from their slavery in Egypt and their journey to Canaan. After Joshua, the Judges lead Israel until God selected Saul as the first king of the Jews. Judges were national heroes. Most of them were military leaders rather than in the legal sense of the word. They lead the Israelites in war against their enemies or protected them from aggression. Some of them acted as Judges and resolved the disputes of the people. The book of Judges is the history of thirteen such Judges. In this chapter, we learn about three of them namely Deborah, Gideon and Samson.

**DEBORAH**

In the book of Judges, we see Othniel and Ehud as the first and second



## CLASS 6

Judges. After the death of Ehud, the people of Israel sinned against the Lord. So the Lord allowed a Canaanite king called Jabin to conquer them. Jabin ruled Israel with cruelty and violence for twenty years. Sisera was the commander of his army.

### **Deborah, the female Judge**

Deborah was the only woman judge of Israel. She was a prophetess and Judge. She used to sit under a palm tree between Ramah and Bethel and resolve the disputes of the people of Israel. One day Deborah sent for

#### *Important Judges of Israel*

*Othniel*

*Ehud*

*Barak*

*Deborah*

*Gideon*

*Jephthah*

*Samson*

Barak, a man from the city of Kedesh and conveyed God's command to him: "Take ten thousand men from the tribes of Naphtali and Zebulun and go to Mount Tabor and engage the army of Jabin led by Sisera at River Kishon" She further said that God would give him victory over the

Canaanites. But Barak told her that he would go only if she accompanied him. She agreed to go but said that he would not get credit for the victory and the Lord would hand over Sisera to a woman.

When Barak attacked, the Lord threw Sisera and his men into confusion. Sisera got down from his chariot and fled by foot. Barak and his men pursued the army of Sisera and killed all of them. Sisera took refuge in the tent of Jael, but he was killed there by Jael himself (Judg. 4: 17-24). When Barak came looking for Sisera, he was dead. Thus they got victory over the Canaanite king and Deborah sang a song of praise to Yahweh, the Lord. After the victory over Jabin there was peace in the land for forty years.

### **GIDEON**

Once again the people of Israel sinned and turned away from God after forty years of peace brought by Deborah. God then allowed the people of Midian to rule them for seven years. The Midianites were stronger than the Israelites and so the Israelites fled and hid in caves and safe places in the hills. The Midianites used to plunder the land of the Israelites and take away their cattle and other animals. Then the people of Israel cried out to the Lord for help.



### God chooses Gideon

Gideon was son of Joash. The Lord's angel appeared to him, and ordered him to rescue Israel from the Midianites. Gideon was doubtful. He asked, "But Lord, how can I rescue Israel? My clan (*clans are subdivisions of tribe*) is the weakest in the tribe of Manasseh and I am the least important member of my family". But the Lord answered, "You can do it because I will help you"

Here God acts through Gideon to save the people and make them realize that he is the true God. The Lord ordered Gideon to destroy the altar built to Bal by Gideon's father Joash and cut down the symbol of goddess Asherah and offer a burnt offering to the Lord there. Gideon did as the Lord told him. When the people of the town came to know that the altar of Bal and Asherah had been destroyed they wanted to kill Gideon. Then Joash told them, "If Bal is God let him defend himself. It is his altar that has been torn down". From then on Gideon was known as 'Jerubbaal'

### Gideon leads Israelites to defeat Midianites

The Midianites, the Amalekites and the desert tribes assembled in the valley of Jezreel to attack the

Israelites. The spirit of the Lord took control of Gideon. Gideon assembled a huge army from his tribe and the other tribes of Israel. Gideon did certain tests to make sure that God had chosen him to rescue Israel. The tests proved that Gideon had been chosen by God (Judg. 6: 36-40).

Gideon and his men camped beside the Spring of Harod and the Midianite camp was in the valley. The Lord asked Gideon to reduce his army as he had too many men and they might think that they had won by their strength. On the instruction of the Lord, Gideon reduced his army to 300 men. He did this by conducting some tests proposed by God (Judg. 7: 2-8). They surrounded the camp of Midianites shortly before midnight and blew their trumpets. The Lord confused the enemy troops and made them turn on one another with their swords and they ran away in panic. The Israelites pursued them and defeated them. Then there was peace in Israel.

Gideon believed that the Lord is the real ruler and taught the same to the people of Israel. There was peace in the country for forty years till Gideon died at a good old age. He never let the Israelites turn away from the real God (Judg. 6-8).



## CLASS 6

### SAMSON

#### Birth of Samson

Each time the Israelites sinned against the Lord, they had to undergo the hardships under the Philistines' rule. Israelites remained under the Philistines for forty years before the birth of Samson. At that time there was a man named Manoah whose wife was not able to bear a child. One day, the Lord's angel appeared and told her that she would soon have a son. The angel also cautioned her, "Take care not to drink any wine or beer, or eat any forbidden food; and after your son is born, you must never cut his hair because from the day of his birth he will be dedicated to God" (Judg. 13:2-5). When Manoah heard the story he was doubtful. God's angel appeared to them again and reassured him.

The woman gave birth to a son and named him Samson. The child grew and the power of God strengthened him. He had great strength. On one occasion he tore apart a young lion with his bare hands. Samson led Israel for 20 years while the Philistines ruled them.

#### Samson marries a Philistine girl

When Samson was a young man he left the hill country where his people lived to see the cities where Philistines lived. There he met a Philistine girl, fell in love with her and wanted to marry her. At that time marriage festivities used to last for seven days. The Philistines sent thirty young men to stay with the bride and bridegroom during the festivities. Samson asked them a riddle and they were offered fine clothes if they could solve the riddle before the end of the seven days. They could not find answer to the riddle. So they persuaded the Philistine





girl to find the answer to the riddle from Samson and convey it to them, which she did. This way the men answered the riddle before the seventh day. Samson became furious at the deception. He went to a nearby place and killed 30 Philistines and took their clothes and presented them to the 30 men as promised by him. He then left the place.

Sometime later Samson went to his wife's house and wanted to take her. Her father told him that she had already been given in marriage to another man, as Samson had left before the completion of the marriage feast. Samson was angry and went and caught 300 foxes. Two by two he tied their tails and put torches in the knots. Then he set fire to the torches and set them free in Philistine cornfields. In this way he burned the entire crop and took revenge against the Philistines. He was so powerful that on another occasion he caught hold of the jawbone of a donkey and killed thousand Philistines with it (Judg. 13-16).

### **Dalilah, the woman who deceived Samson**

Samson again fell in love with a woman called Delilah. The Philistines tried to capture Samson through Dalilah. The five Philistine kings went to her and offered her 1100 pieces of

### *Important events in the lives of Israelites (from Egypt to Canaan)*

- *Israelites spent 390 years in Egypt as slaves*
- *God send Moses to deliver Israelites.*
- *They crossed Red Sea during their journey to Canaan*
- *Lord guided Israel in the desert in a pillar of cloud during day and in a pillar of fire during night*
- *God provided heavenly Manna and water from the rock*
- *God punished Israelites when they committed sin*
- *God provided ten commandments to Israelites*
- *Israel entered Canaan under the leadership Joshua*

silver each if she could find the secret of Samson's strength. She tricked Samson to reveal the secret of his strength. Three times Samson told her lies. Later he disclosed the secret of his strength when he got tired of her nagging. The secret was, if his hair was cut he would loose his strength. (Remember that the angel had told his mother that his hair shall not be cut) She got his hair cut and he lost his strength and the Philistines captured



## CLASS 6

---

him, blinded him, chained him and kept him in captivity.

Then the five Philistine kings met together to celebrate and offer a great sacrifice to their God, the Dagon. They brought Samson to entertain them. There were 3000 people in the building. Samson prayed to God and took hold of the two middle pillars holding the building and putting one hand on each pillar, he pushed against them with all his might. The building collapsed and killed everyone including the five Philistine kings and Samson. Thus Samson killed more Philistines at his

death than he had killed during his life.

Sometimes we can compare the lives of Israelites with ours. When we enjoy the blessings of God, we feel happy. But we forget God in difficult situations and in luxuries. When the Israelites forgot their God who saved them from the Egypt, God gave them to their enemies. We should be with God in good times and bad times. In this story Samson's life is a pointer to the tragedies that can occur in our personnel lives if we are not careful and do not walk in the path of our Lord.

### *Verse for Memorisation*

*"When I was in trouble, I called to the Lord and he answered me"*

Ps. 120:1.

### **I. Answer the Questions**

1. Who are Judges?
2. Name the only woman Judge mentioned in the book of Judges.
3. What was the secret of the strength of Samson?
4. How did Samson kill the five Philistine Kings?
5. Why did God allow the Israelites be persecuted by other nations?

### **II. Fill in the blanks**

1. \_\_\_\_\_ was the Commander of Jabin's Army.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ was the first King of Israel.



3. Gideon was the son of \_\_\_\_\_.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ cut Samson's hair and thus he lost his strength.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ killed more Philistines at his death than he had killed during his life.

### **III. Activity**

1. Who had changed Abram's name to Abraham? Can you find out from Gen. 17.
2. Can you recollect the ten commandments God had given to the Israelites.
3. Write a letter to your best friend about how you celebrated last Christmas.

### **IV. Match the following**

1. Samson	Jerubbaal
2. Symbol of Goddess	One who killed Sisra
3. Jabin	Delilah
4. Jael	Cananite King
5. Gideon	Asherah

### **Prayer**

O merciful God, answer my prayers. When I was in trouble you helped me. Be kind to me now and at all times. Help my friends who are in need. You are my refuge and hope. Help the poor and the needy and all those who are suffering from various diseases. Amen.

It's the first day of Sunday School. You pray to God about the things you hope will happen this year.



## LESSON 2

# SAMUEL, THE JUDGE AND THE PROPHET

(1 Sam. 1-10)

We have seen in the last chapter that Judges ruled the Israelites during the period that lasted from the death of Joshua till Saul was anointed as the first king. Samuel was the last of Israel's Judges and a great prophet. The spiritual life of the Jews at that time was centered at Shiloh where the Sanctuary stood and the Ark of the Covenant was kept. Eli was the High Priest there.

After the death of Samson the Judge, Eli the High Priest had assumed the leadership of the Jews. Eli was a good man and was loved by all the people and they looked to him for spiritual guidance. However his two sons Hophni and Phinehas were scoundrels and took advantage of their position and resorted to bribery and corruption. They treated the offering to the Lord with disrespect. So God had decided to punish them.

### **Samuel's Birth and Dedication**

Elkanah was a religious man who lived at Ramah. He used to make

pilgrimage to Shiloh, with his family, every year to offer sacrifice at the Sanctuary. Elkanah had two wives, Hannah and Peninnah. Hannah was childless. She silently suffered humiliation at the hands of the other wife Peninnah who had several children. Hannah used to pray to God every time they visited Shiloh for a child. Once while praying at the Sanctuary Hannah vowed to God that if she were blessed with a son she would dedicate his whole life to God. That year her prayer was heard and a son was born to her. Hannah named him Samuel saying that she had asked the Lord for him (1 Sam.1:20).

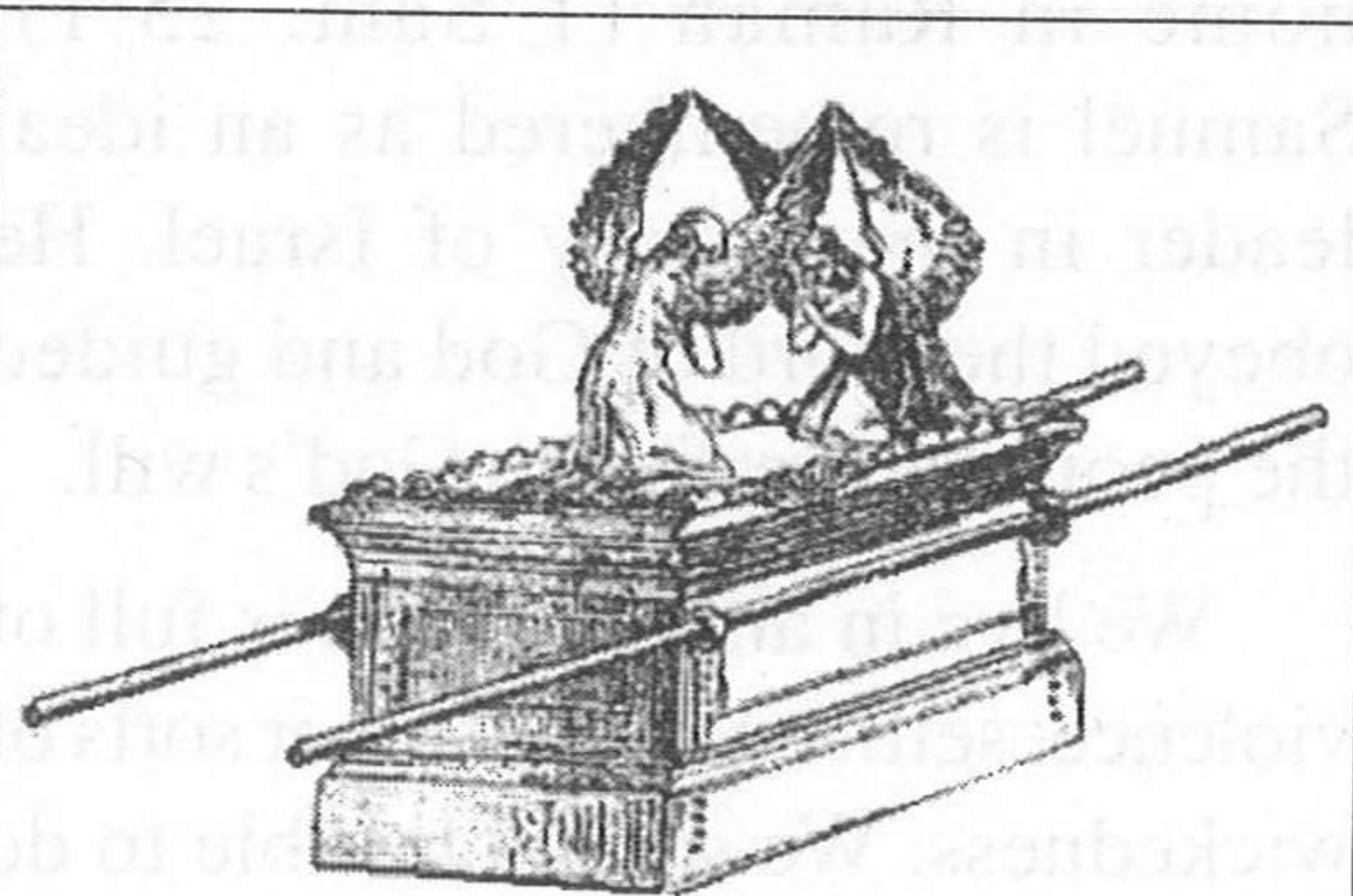
As she had promised to God, she took young Samuel to Shiloh and handed him over to Eli the High Priest of the temple. Samuel grew up in a religious environment and strict discipline under Eli's guidance (1 Sam. 1:19-28). He assisted Eli in his services in the temple.



### The Lord calls Samuel

Samuel received the divine revelation when he was still very young. One night when he was sleeping in the sanctuary, the Lord called him. He got up and ran to Eli thinking that Eli had called him. Eli told him to go back and sleep, as he had not called him. This was repeated three times and then Eli realized that God was calling Samuel. He told Samuel that the next time he hear the voice again, he must say, "Speak Lord, your servant is listening".

The Lord called Samuel again and said to him, "Some day I am going to do something to the people of Israel that is so terrible that everyone who hears it will be stunned. On that day I will carry out all my threats against Eli's family from beginning to end. I have already told him that I am going



*A late 19th-century artist's conception of the Ark of the Covenant*

### *Arc of Covenant:*

*Arc of Covenant symbolized the divine presence. It was a wooden box covered by a lid called 'Mercy Seat'. There were two winged creatures on it standing face to face. The arc of the Covenant contained the covenant stones – as a continual reminder of the covenant between God and Israel. The arc also contained the golden urn containing manna symbolizing the bread of God from heaven. Aaron's rod was placed in it later.*

to punish his family forever because his sons have spoken evil things against me. Eli knew they were doing this but he did not stop them". Eli called Samuel early in the morning and asked him to narrate what God told him, without hiding anything. Samuel reluctantly told him everything. Eli said, "He is the Lord and he will do whatever seems best to him" (1 Sam. 3).

### Samuel Became a Judge

After some time a war broke out with the Philistines in which the Israelites were defeated. On the request of the Elders, the Arc of the



## CLASS 6

---

Covenant was carried to the battlefield by Hophni and Phinehas, the two priests, for receiving God's grace during the fight. The Israelites were routed again. Hophni and Phinehas were among the dead and the Arc of Covenant was captured by the Philistines. When Eli heard the fate of the Holy Arc and his children, he fell from his seat and died. On the death of Eli, Samuel became the Judge (1 Sam. 4).

### **Samuel Rules the Israelites**

When the Philistines were in possession of the Arc of Covenant they were visited by calamities and misfortunes. So they returned the Arc of Covenant to the Israelites. Then Israelites turned back to God. They got rid of idols of Bal and Astarte and worshipped only the Lord. Samuel gathered all the Israelites, they fasted and confessed. The Lord helped them by preventing Philistines from invading Israel. Samuel visited all the places in the territory and settled disputes. He served as a Judge in all these places.

### **Emergence of Monarchy in Israel**

When Samuel grew old he made his two sons judges over Israel, but they did not walk in his way. Then all

the elders of Israel gathered at Ramah and asked Samuel to appoint a king to rule over them. This displeased Samuel who pleaded with them that God is their King. Later the Lord asked Samuel to anoint a king for them after warning them how the king will rule over them and treat them badly. The Lord selected Saul as the king. Samuel anointed him as the king of Israel. He explained to the people the rights and duties of the king and then wrote them in a book and deposited it in a holy place. Saul ruled Israel for many years but departed from God's path in the end and God's spirit left him. As directed by God Samuel anointed David as the future king of Israel who succeeded Saul.

When Samuel died the whole of Israel came together and mourned at his death. They then buried him at his home in Ramah (1 Sam. 25:1). Samuel is remembered as an ideal leader in the history of Israel. He obeyed the word of God and guided the people according to God's will.

We live in an age which is full of violence, selfishness and other sorts of wickedness. We should be able to do something against these evils. We should listen to the call of God and respond according to His will.



**Verse for Memorization**

*“He protects the lives of the faithful people, but the wicked disappear in darkness; a man does not triumph by his own strength. 1 Sam. 2:9.*

**I. Answer the Questions**

- a. Name the parents of Samuel.
- b. Name the two sons of Eli.
- c. Why did God decide to punish Eli’s sons?
- d. Describe the circumstances leading to the death of Eli.
- e. Why did the people ask for a King?

**II. Fill in the Blanks**

- a. After the death of .....Eli became the Judge.
- b. On the death of Eli ..... became the Judge.
- c. ....anointed Saul as the first king of Israel.

**III. Activity**

**A. Cross Word**

**Across**

1. Son of Hannah
2. Father of Samuel
3. Judge of Israel who killed 3000 enemies in a day
4. Every year Elkanah and Hannah visited this place to offer sacrifice to God
5. Place where Samuel was buried.

	1							
5				6				
			3					
2								
7								
			4					



## CLASS 6

---

7. Birth of Jesus was foretold by this prophet

### Down

1. First king of Israel

2. Priest with whom Samuel was serving the Lord in the temple

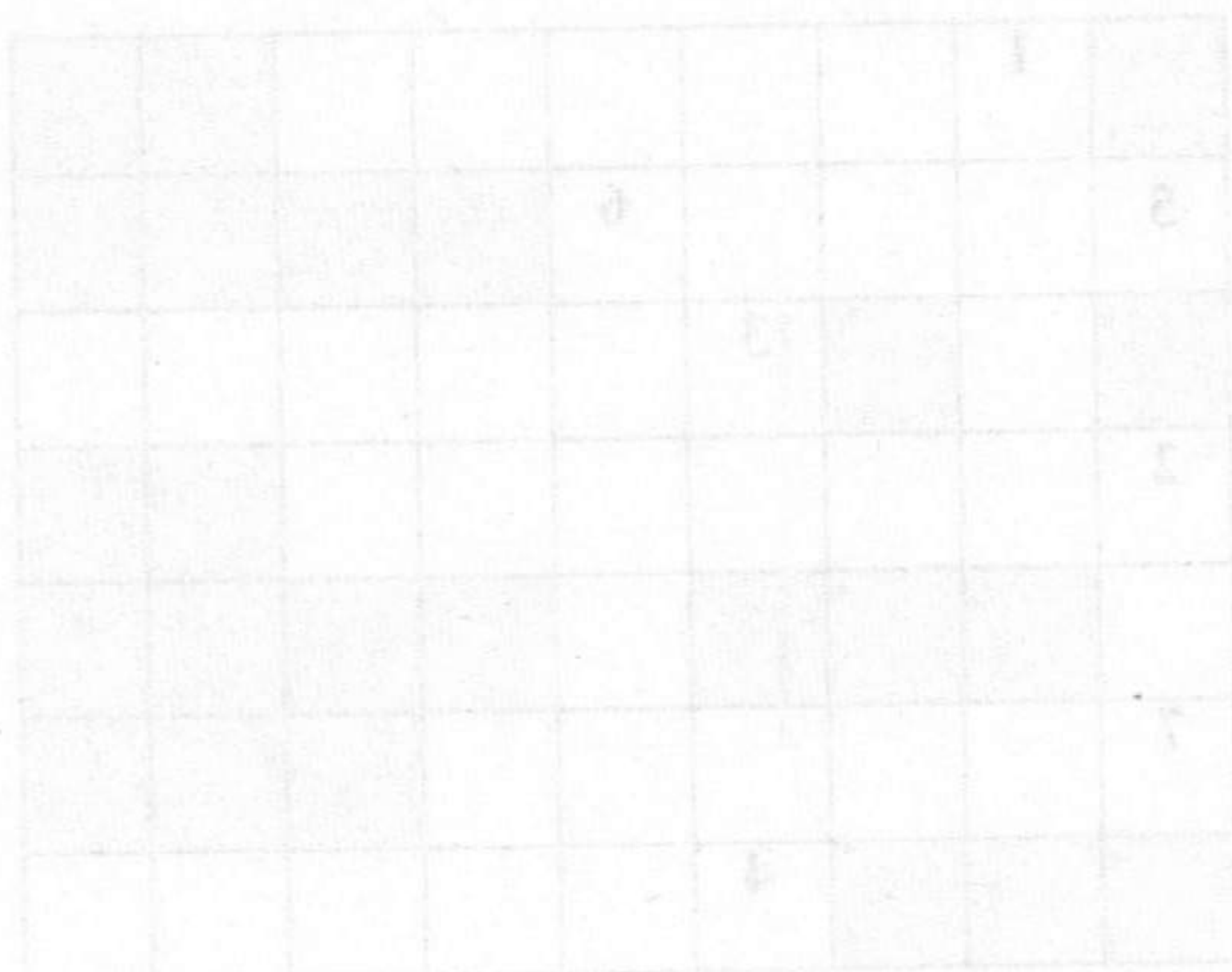
6. Mother of Samuel

**B.** In the Bible we come across people who did not have any child, prayed to God and God listens to their prayers. Discuss with your teacher and find similar examples from Bible.

**C.** Find out prophecies made by Samuel from the book of Samuel (1 Sam. 1-10).

### Prayer

O merciful God, you love us; and guide us in all our troubles and difficulties. Lord help us to grow up as your loving children, following your commands and worshipping you at all times. O merciful God fill us with your Holy spirit and lead us in the correct path. Amen.





### LESSON 3

## SAUL, THE FIRST KING OF ISRAEL

(1 Sam. 9-31)

We have learned in secular classes about the rulers of different nations. Before getting independence, the area constituting present India was controlled by hundreds of kings. Now India is a democratic country. You must have learned about present Israel which is a powerful country surrounded by many Arab nations.

Ancient Israel was a nation different from other nations. They were God's own people and God had chosen leaders and kings for them.

### **God selects Saul as the first King of Israel**

We learned about Judges as the leaders for Israel. At that time some of the neighbouring countries were ruled by kings. Israelites thought that a King would be a better option than Judges to lead them. They asked Samuel for a king. God directed Samuel to anoint Saul as the first king of Israel. Saul was the son of a wealthy and influential man named Kish in the tribe of Benjamin. He was handsome

and the tallest among all the men of Israel. He presented the ideal visual image of a king. When Prophet Samuel anointed Saul as the King of Israel, from that time, the Lord gave Saul a new nature and the spirit of the Lord took control of him.

Samuel called the people of Israel for a religious meeting at Gilgal and Saul was chosen as the King. Samuel then announced, "Here is the man the Lord has chosen. There is no one among us like him". All the people shouted, "Long live the King". But some people were doubtful about the ability of Saul to be the King and did not accept him as the king (1 Sam. 9,10).

### **Saul defeats Enemies**

Saul had to prove himself as an efficient King. He got a chance when the King Nahash of Ammon besieged the Jewish town of Jabesh. The people were terrified by the attack. Saul assembled an army and defeated the Ammonites (1 Sam. 11).



## CLASS 6

Thereafter all the people including those who did not accept him initially as the king proclaimed him as their King.

Later, Saul defeated all his enemies; the people of Moab, Ammon, Edom, Zobah and the Philistines. Wherever he fought he was victorious. He saved the people of Israel from all attacks by their enemies. He had three sons namely Jonathan, Ishvi, and Malchishua. His daughters were Merab and Michal.

### **Saul dishonors Lord's commandments**

There were two incidents which tested his trust and devotion to Yahweh and His Prophet. Once he gathered all the people at Gilgal before he set out for a war against the Philistines. When Samuel did not come at the appointed time to offer offerings and the people began to scatter, Saul himself offered burnt offerings. As he finished the offering, Samuel came. Samuel was grieved to know of this and said. "You have done foolishly: you have not kept the commandment of the Lord your God, which he commanded you... But now your Kingdom shall not continue" (1 Sam. 13:13,14).



Saul's devotion to Yahweh was again put to test in another incident. (1 Sam. 15) He was given the divine command to destroy everything they found in Amalek. But Saul, instead of total destruction, preserved King Agag and all that were found good in the city. This was clearly a disobedience on the part of Saul. Samuel again told Saul. "Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat



of rams.....” From that movement the Lord’ spirit left Saul.

In the meantime the Lord ordered Samuel to go to Bethlehem and anoint David as the king. Samuel obeyed the Lord, but he did not tell anybody including David that he will be the future King.

### Death of Saul

The Philistines fought a battle against the Israelites on Mount Gilboa. Saul and his army were defeated and they fled. The Philistines pursued them and killed many of his people and the three sons of Saul. Saul was wounded. But he did not want to be killed by the Philistines. So Saul took his own sword and threw himself on it and died.

Saul had his greatest successes when he obeyed God. His greatest failures resulted from acting on his own. Saul lost the kingdom because he became unfaithful to the Lord. He disobeyed the Lord’s commands. He tried to find guidance by consulting spirits of the dead instead of consulting the Lord. So the Lord gave the kingdom to David, son of Jesse.



We receive power and status from God. We should be faithful to the Lord and obey His commands. All of us are given various responsibilities according to the will of God. When we live obeying His commandments, God will be a good companion for us and He will help us always. Our failures and shortcomings should remind us to move closer to God.



## CLASS 6

---

### *Verse for Memorisation*

*“Create a pure heart in me, O Lord, and put a new and right spirit within me” Ps. 51:10.*

### **I. Answer the Questions**

- a. Who was the first King of Israel ?
- b. Who anointed Saul as the King ?
- c. Why did the Lord reject Saul as the King of Israel?
- d. What is God’s expectation from us when He gives us power, status and responsibilities?

### **II. Fill in the blanks**

- a. Saul was the son of a wealthy and influential man named \_\_\_\_\_  
— from the tribe of \_\_\_\_\_.
- b. Saul lost the kingdom because he.....to the Lord.
- c. It is better to \_\_\_\_\_ Him than to sacrifice the best sheep to Him.
- d. Our failures and shortcomings should remind us..... to God.

### **III. Activities**

- A. Discuss some of the kingdoms around the world and their system of governance in comparison with that followed by our country.
- B. Discuss how we can lead a life faithful to God.
- C. Look at some of the good and bad qualities. Try to add more of them in the empty boxes. Which are the qualities that you practice in your life. Cross out from the box qualities God wants us to get rid of.



How can you get rid of the bad habits from your lives? Discuss with your teacher and friends.

<b>Kindness</b>	<b>Anger</b>	<b>Forgiveness</b>
<b>Help others</b>		
<b>Insults</b>	<b>Faithfulness</b>	<b>Love your friends</b>
	<b>Tease others</b>	

**Prayer**

Dear God, You know everything. You know what is in our mind. We cannot hide anything from You. God, You have always been forgiving us even when we disobeyed your commands. Send us your Holy Sprit and guide us in our life. Amen.



LESSON 4

**STRENGTHENING GOD:  
STORY OF DAVID**

(1 Sam. 17)

**David, the Shepherd Boy**

One of the best known characters in Biblical history is David. He had many qualities and was known as a poet, musician, shepherd, soldier and King of Israel (*'David' means 'beloved of God'*). The story of David and Goliath is one of the fascinating stories in the Bible. It is the story of a shepherd boy who defeated the mighty Philistine warrior Goliath and later became the king of Israel.

David was the youngest among the eight sons of Jesse hailing from Bethlehem in Judah. He was a Shepherd and used to tend his father's sheep. He had developed his courage and fighting skills by protecting the flock from wild animals including lions and bears. Saul was the king of Israel during that time. Jesse's three elder sons were in Saul's army and were among the soldiers facing the Philistines.

**Goliath, the giant challenges Israelites**

Battles between the Israelites and its neighbors, especially the Philistines were very common during that time. On one such occasion the Philistines gathered for battle in Socoh, a town in Judah. The Philistines lined up on one hill and the Israelites under the leadership of their king Saul, on the opposite hill, with a valley in between them. A giant soldier among the Philistines called Goliath came out from the Philistine camp to challenge the Israelites.

Goliath shouted at the Israelites, "What are you doing there, lined up for battle? Choose one of your men to fight me. If he wins and kills me, we will be your slaves; but if I win and kill him, you will be our slaves." Goliath challenged the Israelites like this daily, morning and evening, for forty days, and dared the Israelites to send someone to fight him. Saul and his men were terrified by Goliath.



### David visits his brothers in the battle field

It was on one of these days that Jesse sent David to the camp to enquire about the well being of his three sons and also to give them special food items as they were away from home for a long time. David left someone else in charge of the sheep; took the food and went to the camp.

#### ***Book of Psalms:***

*Psalms means Songs. Book of Psalms have 150 chapters. The authors are David, Asaph, Solomon, Moses, Heman, Ethan and Sons of Korah. The authors of some psalms are not known. There are 2461 verses in Psalms.*

He went to the frontline and met his brothers and was enquiring about their well being. As he was talking to them, Goliath came forward and challenged the Israelites as usual. When the Israelites heard Goliath they ran in terror. But David was not afraid and remarked, "Who is this heathen Philistine to defy the army of the living God". But his brothers were scared and wanted him to go back home immediately.

King Saul considered Goliath as a big challenge. He promised to give a big reward to the man who would kill Goliath. He had also promised to give his daughter in marriage to that man. David came to know about the promise of Saul from others in the camp. While David was making enquiries about the promises King Saul had made, some one went up to Saul and informed him about David. Saul sent for David. David said to Saul, "Your Majesty, no one should be afraid of this Philistine! I will go and fight him". Saul said, "No, how could you fight him? You are only a boy and he had been a soldier all through his life". David told Saul that he was a Shepherd and whenever a lion or bear carried away a lamb from his flock he would go after it and rescue the lamb. He used to grab the wild animals by their throat and kill them. Likewise he had killed many lions and bears. He would do the same to Goliath.

### David kills Goliath

When Saul heard David's courage and skills he agreed and gave David his own armour to wear. But David could not walk wearing them, as he was not used to wear an armour and took it off. David took his shepherd's stick and five smooth stones from the stream and put



## CLASS 6

---



them in his bag. With his catapult ready he challenged Goliath.

When Goliath saw David, he was full of scorn for him because he was only a boy. He said to David, "What is that stick for? Do you think I am a dog? Come on, I will give your body to birds and animals to eat". David replied, "You are coming against me with spear and javelin but, I come against you in the name of the Lord Almighty. ... This very day the Lord will put you in my power I will defeat you and cut your head and everyone here will see that the Lord does not need swords or spears to save his people."

Goliath started walking towards David. David ran quickly towards him and put his hand in his bag and took a

stone and slung it against Goliath. It hit him on his forehead and broke his skull and Goliath fell on the ground. David ran to him, stood over him, took Goliath's sword from his sheath and cut off his head. Thus David defeated Goliath with a catapult and stone. When Philistines saw that their hero was dead they ran away. With this incident David became well known in Israel.

### **David, the greatest King, willing to admit his failures to God, repent**

After the death of Saul, David became the King of Israel at the age of 30. Most of the Psalms in the Bible are written by David. David sinned many times but he was quick to confess the



sins. His confessions were from his heart and he experienced the joy of forgiveness. David learned from his mistakes and never repeated them. When David died, he was buried at Jerusalem. David trusted God and God gave him the power to defeat his

enemies. Is there something so big that you don't see a way to overcome it? Ask God for his help. David's life story is a good example to understand that God can do wonders even with people who seems to be weak in the eyes of world.

### *Verse for Memorization*

*"The Lord is with me, I will not be afraid; what can anyone do to me?"*  
(Ps. 118:6)

### **I. Answer the questions**

- a. Why did David come to the battlefield?
- b. How did David convince Saul to allow him to fight Goliath?
- c. How did David kill Goliath?
- d. Where was David buried?
- e. Do you find any good qualities in David's personal life in relation to God? Mention them.

### **II. Fill in the blanks**

- a. Goliath challenged the army of Saul for \_\_\_\_\_ days.
- b. The word 'David' means \_\_\_\_\_.
- c. David defeated Goliath with a \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
- d. David trusted..... and God gave him .....to defeat his enemies

### **III. Activities**

- A. Prepare the conversation between Saul and David and David and Goliath and enact the same.



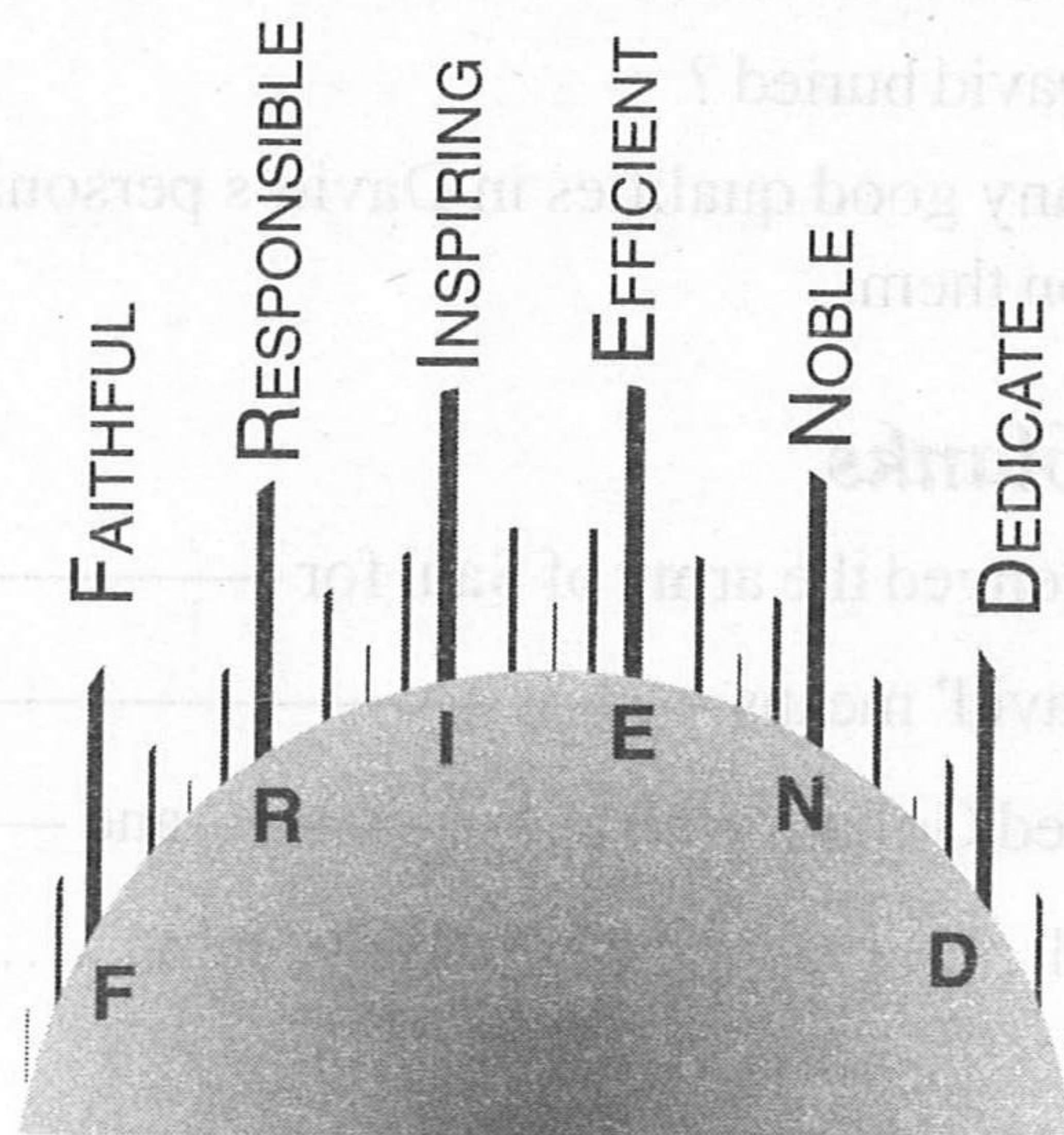
## CLASS 6

- B. Discuss some of the prayers taken from Psalms which are used daily by us. Also try to find out as many songs written on the basis of texts from the Psalms.
- C. Read Psalm 32. It mentions about many of the blessings from God: God makes room for my feet (Vs.34),  
Makes my enemies helpless (Vs.40)  
Let us find more blessings from God mentioned in this chapter.

### Prayer

Lord God strengthen me, so that I can fight against the evils in the World. Lord you have been my refuge and strength. Lord, hold my hand and lead me and show me the way. Let your Holy Spirit guide me throughout my life. Amen.

All of us enjoy good friendship. The company of good friends make joyfull and unforgettable moments. A good friend will have the following qualities and he will lead other in the right path.



*Are you a good friend?*



## LESSON 5

# SOLOMON'S WISDOM

(1 Kgs. 3, 2 Chr. 1)

Solomon was considered as the wisest of all the Kings. He was the son of David and Bethsheba. He became the King of Israel after David. He was the third king of Israel. Solomon was renowned for his wisdom and wealth. He is also known for building the first Jewish Temple of God in Jerusalem to house the Ark of the Covenant containing the stone slabs inscribing the Ten Commandments.

### **Solomon prays for Wisdom**

Soon after he was anointed King, he took all his officers, heads of families and people to a place of worship at Gibeon. That night the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream and asked him, "What would you like me to give you?" Solomon answered, "Give me the wisdom I need to rule your people and to know the difference between good and evil." The Lord was pleased that Solomon had asked for this and said

to him, "Because you have asked for the wisdom to rule justly instead of long life for yourself or riches or death for your enemies, I will give you what you have asked. I will give you more wisdom and understanding than anyone has ever had before or will ever have again. I will also give you what you have not asked for; all your life you will have wealth and honour, more than that of any other King. And if you obey me and keep my laws and commands, as your father David did I will give you long life." (2 Chr. 1:7-12, 1 Kgs. 3:4-14)



*The Western wall from the remains of the Jerusalem temple*



## CLASS 6

### The Construction of the Jerusalem Temple

Solomon built God's temple in Jerusalem. As commanded by Solomon, the Ark of Covenant was brought and laid in the Temple with

#### *Jerusalem Temple*

*First Temple was built by King Solomon. It was the center of ancient Judaism according to Hebrew scripture. As the sole place of Jewish sacrifice, the Temple replaced the local sanctuaries and crude altars in the hills. This First Temple was destroyed by the Babylonians. Construction of a new temple was begun in 537 BC; completed in 516 BC. Book of Ezra gives the details of this. The Second Temple was renovated by Herod the Great in about 20 BC, also known as Herod's Temple. It was subsequently destroyed by the Romans in A.D 70. All of the outer walls still stand today, although the Temple itself has long since been destroyed, and for many years it was believed that the western wall of the complex was the only wall standing.*

great celebration. The dedication of the temple was one of the most important events in the history of Israel.

### Solomon Judges a Difficult Case

One day two women came to King Solomon with a baby. Both claimed to be the mother of that baby. One of them said, "Your Majesty, this woman and I live in the same house, and I gave birth to a baby boy. Two days later she also gave birth to a baby boy. Only two of us were present in the house and no one else was present. Then one night she accidentally rolled on the child and it died. She got up during the night, took my son from my side while I was asleep and carried him to her bed and put the dead child in my bed. Next morning when I woke up and was going to feed the baby I realised that it was dead. On a closer look I realised that it was not my baby." But the other woman said, "No the dead child is yours and the living one is mine" and so they argued before the King. The King ordered for a sword and when it was brought, he said, "Cut the living child into two and give each woman one part." The real mother, her heart full of love for her son said, "Please, your Majesty, don't kill the child! Give it to her." But the other woman said,



“Don’t give it to either of us; go ahead and cut it into two.” Then Solomon said, “Don’t kill the child! Give it to the first woman – she is the real mother” (1Kgs. 3: 16-28)

### **Solomon disobeys God’s Commands**

Solomon’s fame reached far and wide. Queen Sheba of Ethiopia travelled to Jerusalem with a large contingent, camels loaded with immeasurable quantity of gold, jewels and spices to test him with difficult questions. She asked him all the questions that she could think of and he answered all of them. Sheba congratulated Solomon,

saying, “Your wisdom and wealth are far greater than the fame that I heard of you”. Solomon took wives from different countries to establish cordial relations with them. He built special places of worship for his wives. Because of this, God became angry with him. Solomon’s actions showed that he had deviated from doing right in his personal life

After a long reign of forty years Solomon left this world. He was buried in Jerusalem. Most of the proverbs in the Book of Proverbs are written by Solomon. The Song of Songs is also written by King Solomon.

### ***Verse for Memorization***

*The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. Prov. 1: 7.*

### **I. Answer the Questions**

- How did Solomon get wisdom?
- Who built the Jerusalem Temple ?
- How many years did Solomon rule Israel?
- What made the Lord to come angry with Solomon?

### **II. Fill in the blanks**

- Solomon was the son of .....and .....
- The queen of ..... travelled to Jerusalem to test Solomon



## CLASS 6

---

- c. The two books in the bible written by Solomon are .....  
and .....
- d. It took ..... years to complete the construction of the Jerusalem temple.

### III. Activity

- A. Compare the three characters, Saul, David and Solomon and examine which character influenced your life, and how ?
- B. Enact a skit to show King Solomon judged the difficult case.

### Prayer

Lord God, grant me the serenity to accept things that I cannot change; the courage to change things I can; and the wisdom to know the difference, so that I may live a life which is pleasing to you.



## LESSON 6

# HEAVENLY GUIDANCE FOR ISRAEL: PROPHET ELIJAH

(1 Kgs. 17-19)

After the rule of Solomon, his son Rehoboam became the King. The nation was divided into two- the northern nation was called Israel and the southern nation Judah. Both the countries passed through a difficult time because of internal and external problems. Many times they had violated the rules of the Lord and the prophets tried to correct them.

### **Elijah, Yahweh's Servant**

Elijah was a prophet when King Ahab ruled the kingdom of Israel (*The word Elijah means Yahweh is my God*). Elijah had a very personal relationship with God. God accomplished amazing miracles through Elijah. Ahab sinned against the Lord more than any of his predecessors. He married Jezebel, a foreign princess. He worshipped the heathen god, Baal. This angered prophet Elijah. He said to Ahab, "In the name of the Lord, the living God of Israel, whom I serve, I tell you that there will be no dew or rain for the next two or three years until I say so."

As commanded by the Lord, Elijah went and stayed by the brook of Cherith. There, the ravens brought him bread and meat in the morning and evening and he drank from the brook.. In the third year Elijah went to Ahab. When Ahab saw him, he said, "So, you are the man who has brought all this trouble on the land." Elijah said firmly, "No, it's your fault for disobeying God's laws and worshipping Baal, the heathen god. Order the people of Israel to meet me on Mount Carmel, and bring all prophets of your god

### ***Angel feeds Elijah***

*Elijah was fed by ravens and another time by a widow. Amazingly he was fed by an angel also. As Elijah lay down to sleep under the Jupiter tree, being exhausted by the flight from Jezebel, an angel touched him to feed him to prepare for a long journey. The Angel did this twice. Elijah stayed in the strength of this food for 40 days.*



## CLASS 6

---

Baal, and I will show you which is the true God”.

### **Miracle proves the power of our God**

King Ahab did as Elijah had said, and crowds of people, together with all the prophets of Baal came to

#### *Some Miracles by Elijah*

- 1. Elijah multiplied meat and oil*
- 2. Elijah predicted three and half years drought*
- 3. Elijah resurrected the widow's son*

Mount Carmel to see what would happen. Elijah said to the people “How long will it take you to decide which is the true God? If the Lord is God, then follow Him, but if Baal is your God then follow him. I’m the only prophet of the Lord now, but there are 450 prophets of Baal. Fetch two bulls. The prophets of Baal shall choose one and lay it on the wood for a sacrifice, without lighting a fire under the wood. I will do the same with the other. Then we will each call upon our gods to send down fire, and the god who answers by sending fire is the true God.”

Elijah turned to the prophets of Baal and asked them to call upon their

gods first. The prophets of Baal arranged the wood and prepared the bull for burning. Then they began to call upon their god, ‘Baal! Baal! Answer us!’. All morning they continued shouting but nothing happened. Then they leaped and danced around the altar, but still there was no sign from Baal. About mid-day Elijah made fun of them. ‘Shout louder,’ he said ‘Perhaps your god is sleeping or has gone away!’. So they shouted even louder but not a spark of fire was seen.

Then Elijah called all the people and took twelve stones, one for each tribe named after the sons of Jacob and built an altar with those stones and dug a wide trench around it. Then he piled up the woods and put the bull on top of it. ‘Now fill four jars of water and pour them over the sacrifice’ he said. Elijah ordered this to be done three times until the water ran all over the altar and filled the trench.

Then Elijah walked to the altar and prayed, ‘O Lord God, show these people that you are the God of Israel and I am your servant, and I have done all these things at your command’. The Lord sent down fire and it burnt up the sacrifice. When people saw this, they threw themselves on the ground and exclaimed, “The Lord is God, the Lord alone is God!”

Then Elijah ordered, “Seize the prophets of Baal, and don’t let them



go!” The people seized them and Elijah led them down to the River Kishon and killed them.

**God hears our prayer**

We learnt how our God guided the

people of Israel. He listens to their prayers. This lesson is another example to understand that our Lord is the true God. We should not worship any God other than Him. He gives answers when we pray to him sincerely.

**Verse for Memorization**

*The Lord is my light and salvation; I will fear no one. Ps. 27:1*

**I. Answer the Questions:**

- a. Who was the King during the period of Elijah ?
- b. How did Elijah survive during the drought ?
- c. Why did the people acknowledge that the Lord alone is God ?
- d. How did God punish Ahab ?
- e. What was the prayer of Elijah at Mount Carmel ?
- f. How did Elijah defeat the prophets of Baal?

**II. Fill in the blanks**

- a. Elijah offered the sacrifice on Mount .....
- b. We should not worship any God other than .....

**III. Activity**

- A. Give the names of the other Prophets in the Bible who got the special care from God. (e.g. Moses, Samuel, Elisha etc.)
- B. God has done many miracles through Elijah. Some of them are given in the box. Read 1 Kgs.17-19 and find more miracles done by Elija and discuss them.

**Prayer**

Our Father in Heaven, grant us the courage to fight against evil in this world. Lead us to walk in your ways, so that, we shall always praise your name. Amen.



## LESSON 7

# GOD PROTECTS HIS PEOPLE FROM ENEMIES: PROPHET ELISHA

(2 Kgs. 6)

### **Elisha, the successor of Elijah**

When we look into the history of Israel we can see that God selected suitable successors for their leaders, prophets and kings. We have seen this from the time of Moses onwards.

Elisha (*Elisha, means "God [El] is salvation"*) was the successor and disciple of Elijah. He is remembered in the biblical stories as a man of wisdom and a worker of miracles both on behalf of his nation in times of crisis and in the lives of individuals in time of need. He was active for a period of about fifty years (850-800 BC) during the reign of Joram, Jehu, Jehoahaz, and Jehoash (Joash).

Elisha was a hard working farmer. One day when he was ploughing his field with a team of oxen, Elijah passed by him and put his own cloak round Elisha's shoulders. Elisha knew that this was a sign to him that he must carry on Elijah's work as a prophet. Then onwards, Elisha became the disciple of Prophet Elijah.

### **Elisha gets double share of Elijah's spirit**

When the time came for the Lord to take Elijah up to heaven, he asked Elisha, "What would you like me to do for you before I am taken away from you?" Elisha answered, "Let me have a double share of your spirit". Then Elijah said, "You will have it if you see me as I am being taken away from you." Suddenly a Chariot of fire drawn by horses came between them, and it took Elijah up to heaven in a great whirlwind. Elisha saw it and thus he got a double share of the spirit of Elijah (2 King 2). Elisha carried on the work of God's prophet for more than fifty years, preaching the word of God to all the people. God worked many miracles through Elisha.

### **Elisha saves Israel from the Syrian Army**

During this time, the King of Syria was at war with Israel. The King consulted his officers and chose a place to set up his camp. But Elisha warned the King of Israel not to go near that place because the Syrians were



waiting in ambush there. So the king got alerted and warned his army to be on guard. This happened several times. The Syrian king got upset over this and he called his officers and asked them, "Who among you is on the side of the King of Israel?." One of them answered "No one, Your Majesty. The prophet Elisha tells the King of Israel whatever you say and plan." The king ordered to find out where he was and to capture him. The king was told that Elisha was in Dothan. So he sent a large force of army to capture Elisha.

### God made Syrian Army blind

Early next morning, when Elisha's servant got up and went out he saw the Syrian troops with horses and chariots all around the city. He informed this to Elisha. Elisha comforted him and said, "We have more on our side than they have on their's." Then he prayed, "O Lord, open his eyes and let him see!" The Lord answered his prayer, and Elisha's servant looked up and saw the hillside covered with horses and chariots of fire, all around Elisha.

When the Syrians attacked, Elisha prayed, "O Lord, strike these men blind!" The Lord answered his prayer and struck them blind. Elisha went upto them and told them that they were on the wrong path and that the man they were looking for was not in that town. And then he misled them to another town called Samaria.

As soon as they entered the city Elisha prayed, "Open their eyes, Lord, and let them see." The Lord restored their sight and the Syrian Army found themselves in the city of Samaria. When the Israelite King saw the Syrian army, the King asked Elisha, "Shall I kill them, Sir?" Elisha answered, "Don't

### *Elisha*

*Elisha, (means "El [God] is salvation") was the successor and disciple of Elijah. He is remembered in the biblical stories as a man of wisdom and a worker of miracles both on behalf of his nation in times of crisis and in the lives of individuals in time of need. He was active for a period of some fifty years (850-800 BC) during the reigns of Joram, Jehu, Jehoahaz, and Jehoash (Joash).*

kill them, you wouldn't kill people whom you haven't captured with your sword and bow. Give them food and water, and let them eat and drink and then go to their master". So he prepared a great feast for the Syrian Army. After they ate and drank, the king sent them away, and they went home to their master. The Syrian army did not come anymore into the land of Israel.

Elisha was one of the most unique personality among the prophets. He



## CLASS 6

---

ministered as a prophet for about 50 years during the reigns of Ahab, Ahaziah, Jehu, Jehoram, Jehoahaz and Joash. Elisha's Spiritual vision was very strong. He led a victorious life filled with spirit.

From this lesson we learn that God cares for his people and protects them in times of danger. If we give ourselves completely in to God's hands, to be led by His spirit, God will work miracles through us too.

### **Verse for Memorization:**

*"Look at the birds; they do not sow seeds, gather a harvest and put it in barns: yet your Father in heaven takes care of them! Aren't you worth much more than birds" ? St. Mt. 6:26.*

### **I. Answer the Questions:**

- a. How was Elijah taken up to heaven ?
- b. How did Elisha get the power ?
- c. What was the prayer of Elisha when the Syrians attacked them ?
- d. What was the answer of Elisha when the Israelite King asked him to kill the Syrians ?

### **II. Who said to whom**

- a. "Let me have a double share of your spirit".
- b. "Who among you is on the side of the King of Israel?."
- c. "Give them food and water, and let them eat and drink and then go to their master".

### **III. Activity**

- A. Write an incident in your life, where God protected you or any of your family members from a dangerous situation.
- B. Draw a picture showing a Chariot of fire drawn by horses, taking Elijah up to heaven in a great whirlwind.
- C. Read the related portion in the Bible and find out the miracles done by God through Elisha.

### **Prayer**

Our merciful God, you have guided Israelites from all dangers through the prophets. God guide us from all dangers in our life. Amen.



## LESSON 8

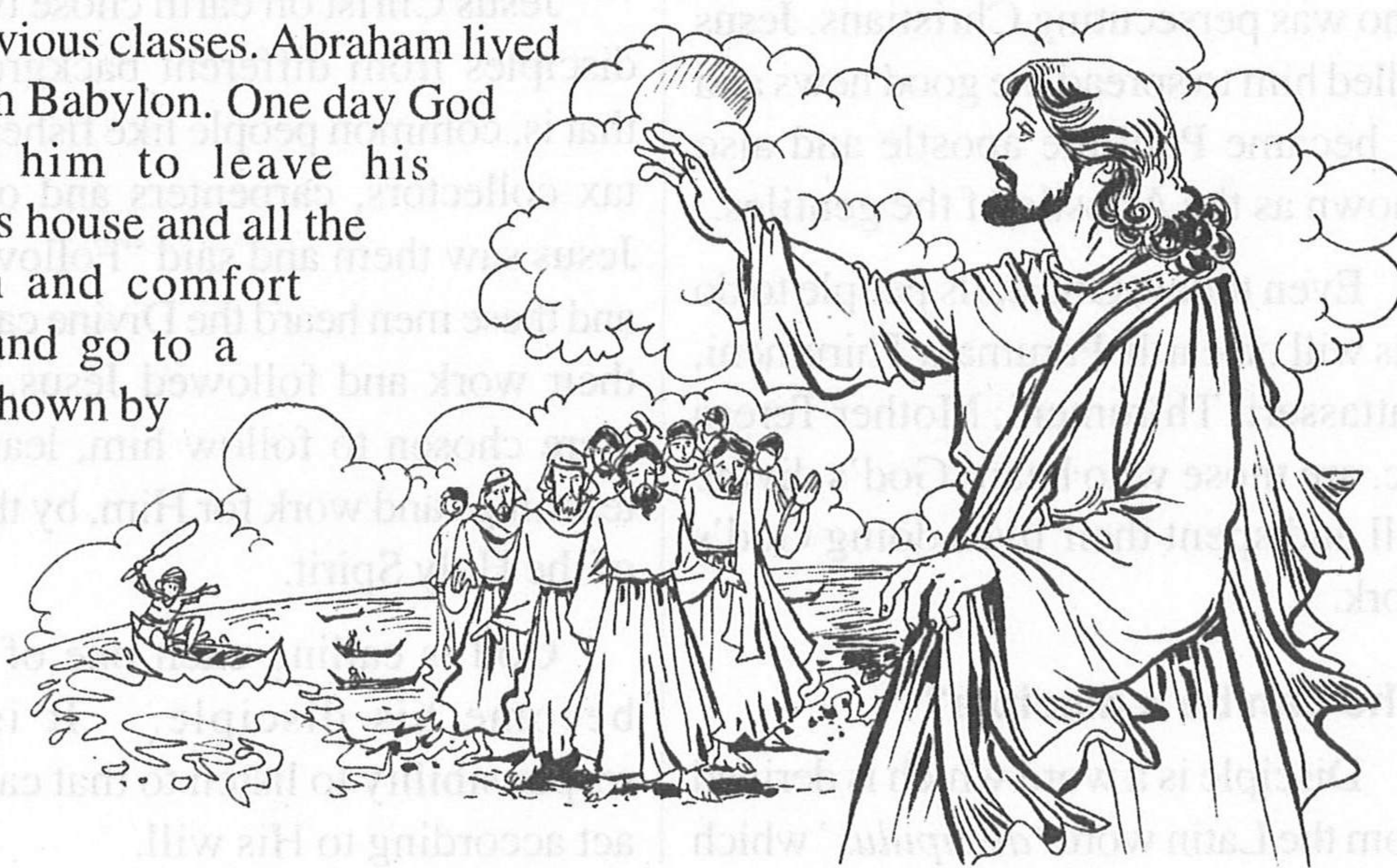
**DIVINE CALL AND  
DISCIPLESHIP OF CHRIST****Divine Call**

God created this universe and humanity and has a plan for each of us. He chooses people to carry out his work. Being chosen by Him to do His work is the Divine call. Let us look in the Bible to see the people who got the divine call.

We have learnt about Abraham in the previous classes. Abraham lived in Ur in Babylon. One day God asked him to leave his father's house and all the wealth and comfort there and go to a place shown by

God. Abraham being a good man, obeyed God's call and went where he was directed to go, to the land of Canaan.

We know the story of Moses who lived like a prince in the house of Pharaoh of Egypt. God choose him to





## CLASS 6

---

lead the Israelites from bondage. He left the palace and became the leader of the Israelites to save them from slavery.

God even calls small children to do his work. The story of Samuel is a good example. Samuel was the last Judge and prophet of Israel. God called him when he was a very small child and he heard that call.

Prophet Isaiah heard the Lord's voice saying, "Whom can I send? Who will go for us?" Isaiah answered, "Here I am, send me." This is what our reply should be, when God calls each one of us.

Even people who do not know or believe in God were called by Him. This is true in the life of Saul a Jew who was persecuting Christians. Jesus called him to spread the good news and he became Paul the apostle and also known as the Apostle of the gentiles.

Even today, God calls people to do His will on earth. Parumala Thirumeni, Vattasseril Thirumeni, Mother Teresa etc. are those who heard God's divine call and spent their lives doing God's work.

### **Who can be a disciple?**

Disciple is a word which is derived from the Latin word '*discipulus*' which

means a learner. So the disciple is a learner who has to walk through the narrow path of suffering before they reach the gate of salvation. A disciple believes in the teaching of his teacher or Master and follows it in his life, and also spreads the good teachings to others

### **Qualities of a good disciple**

We need to have certain qualities to become a disciple of Jesus Christ. (i) Humility (ii) Faithfulness (iii) Love (iv) Forgiveness (v) Righteousness (vi) Simplicity (vii) Willingness to suffer. Jesus himself has explained the need to have these qualities to become his disciple.

Jesus Christ on earth chose twelve disciples from different backgrounds that is, common people like fishermen, tax collectors, carpenters and others. Jesus saw them and said "Follow me" and these men heard the Divine call, left their work and followed Jesus. They were chosen to follow him, learn his teachings and work for Him, by the gift of the Holy Spirit.

God is calling each one of us to become his disciple. It is our responsibility to listen to that call and act according to His will.



**Verse For Memorization**

“Whoever does not take up his cross and follow in my steps is not fit to be my disciple”. Mt. 10:38.

**I. Answer the Questions**

- a. What is Divine call?
- b. Who is a disciple?
- c. Name three people who got the divine call.
- d. What was the reply of Prophet Isaiah, when God called him?
- e. What does the word ‘discipulus’ means?

**II. Fill in the Blanks**

- a. \_\_\_\_\_ obeyed God’s call and went, where he was directed to go, to the land of Canaan.
- b. \_\_\_\_\_ was the last judge and prophet of Israel.
- c. Jesus called \_\_\_\_\_, a Jew who was persecuting Christians.
- d. Jesus Christ on earth chose \_\_\_\_\_ disciples from different backgrounds.
- e. Disciple is a word which is derived from the Latin word \_\_\_\_\_.

**III. Activity**

- A. Collect pictures of three Fathers who got the Divine Call.
- B. Find out the Bible passages where you can find Jesus calling his disciples to follow him.
- C. Discuss among yourselves, how you will serve as a disciple of the Lord, in the present scenario?

**Prayer**

Our Father in Heaven, we thank you for loving us and caring us. Thank you for giving us this beautiful world to live in. You have called the disciples to spread your Gospel. Thank you for choosing us to hear and learn more about you. Help us to glorify your name among those who do not know you. We praise your name for ever and ever, Amen.



## LESSON 9

# THE FIRST DISCIPLES – SIMON, ANDREW, JAMES AND JOHN

(Mt. 4:18-23; Mk. 2:16-28)

### Disciples: transition from fishermen to fishers of men

The disciples of Jesus Christ were fishermen. When Jesus chose them to become his disciples, he called them by saying **“Come follow me and I will make you fishers of men”** Jesus began his ministry after his baptism by John the Baptist. The first thing Jesus did was to choose his disciples who were to continue the good work.

### Simon Peter

Peter was a fisherman along with his Andrew. As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee he saw two brothers Simon, known as Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting their nets into the lake as they were fishermen. Jesus called them to follow him and they heard Jesus’ voice and left their nets to follow him.

Peter was the eldest of the apostles and the mouthpiece of the apostolic band. He was introduced to Jesus by his brother Andrew. In all the lists of

the twelve Apostles, he comes first. On several occasions Peter appears as the representative of the apostles. He confessed on behalf of the apostles that Jesus was the Christ. His former name was Simon, but our Lord renamed him Peter, which means “Rock”. His faith in Jesus was as firm as a rock, but in face of tribulations, he failed to

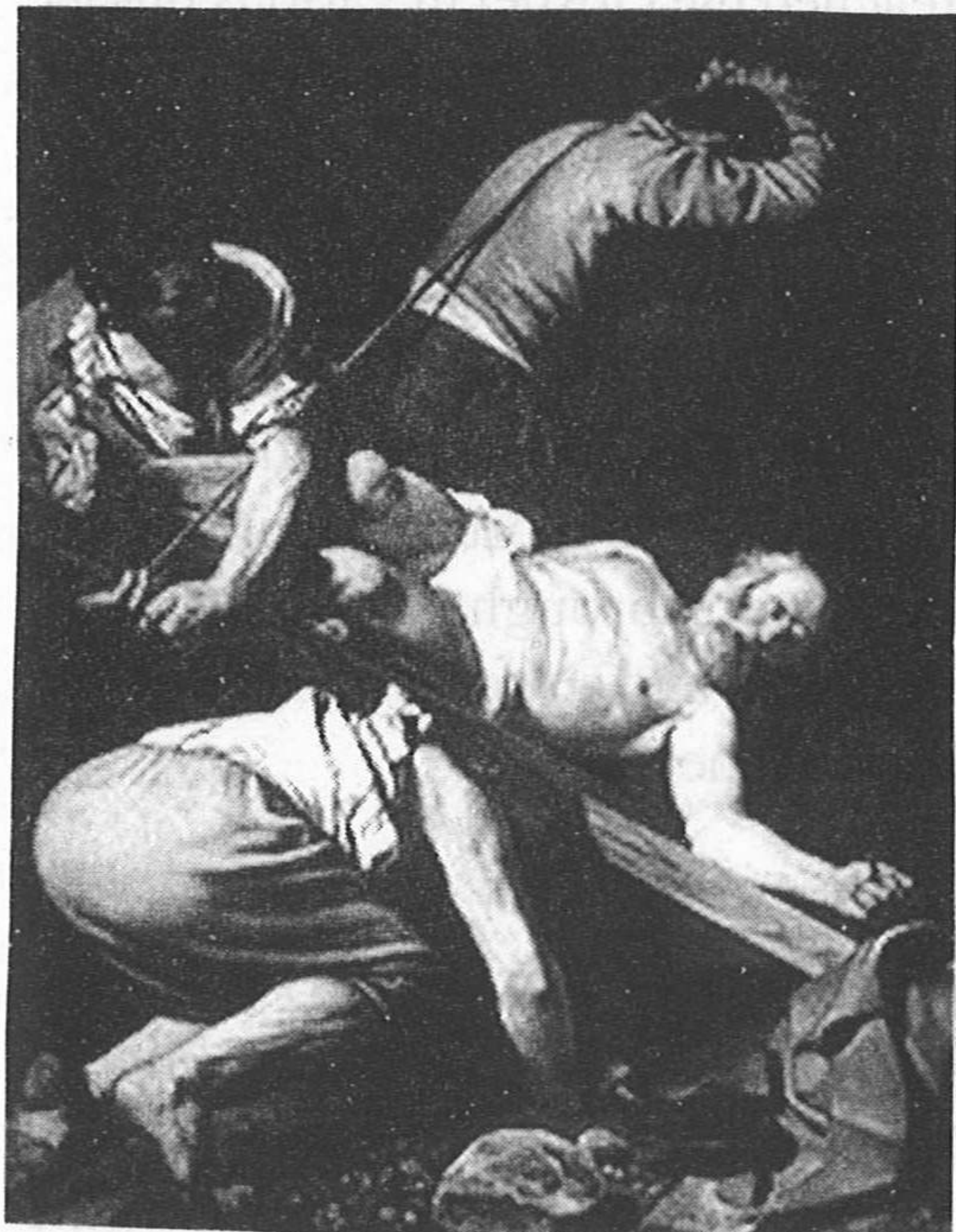


adhere to his faith, as when Jesus was arrested and tried he denied Jesus thrice. But later, he repented.

Peter was the one who spoke on the Pentecost day and hearing his speech three thousand people were



baptized and added to the church. At Joppa, Peter had a strange experience. He saw a vision which taught him the necessity of mission to Gentiles. (Acts. 10:1-48) It was Peter who first baptized the Gentiles and thus opened the door of the church for them. He was kept in Prison by King Herod but in the night Peter was visited by an angel and was released. It is believed that Peter suffered martyrdom in Rome during the persecution of Emperor Nero. The tradition says that he was crucified head downwards to satisfy his own desire to kiss the feet of the crucified Lord.



*Crucifixion of Peter*

The Church of Rome and Antioch hold their Apostolic succession from Peter. The Church observes his feast on 29<sup>th</sup> June. There are two Epistles of St. Peter in the Bible.

### Andrew

Andrew was the first disciple to come to Jesus and brought his brother, Simon Peter to Jesus. Andrew was very humble and worked behind the scenes. He is seen only three times in the Bible. He was a fisherman and earlier a disciple of John the Baptist. He witnessed Christ's baptism by John and was impressed by John's words, "Behold the Lamb of God" which compelled him to meet the Lord. Andrew was the disciple who told Jesus about the boy, who had five loaves and two fish at the feeding of the five thousand.

There are various attributions to him of preaching at different destinations. One famous tradition says that he founded a church at Byzantium. The tradition says that he was crucified at Patras in Achaia in A.D 62 by the Governor Aegeatus. While he was alive on the cross he taught the Christians, who gathered around him. The people wanted to take him down from the cross, but he did not allow. Finally, the



## CLASS 6



first called Apostle finished his earthly course. Another tradition says that Andrew was nailed to a tree at Edessa, and hung there for two days in pain. On the third day he died still preaching Jesus. St. Andrew is the patron Saint of Achaia, Greece, Russia, Scotland and Ukraine church. The church observes his feast on 30<sup>th</sup> November.

### James

James was called as a disciple by Jesus while mending nets in a fishing boat by the lake of Gannesareth with his brother, John, the Apostle and their

father, Zebedee. Their mother was Salome, who once asked Jesus to give special privileges to her sons in the Lord's Kingdom. Jesus Christ gave the brothers the surname, "Boanerges" meaning "Sons of Thunder", because of their fiery temper. Once they wanted the Master to burn a whole town. Jesus had a special friendship with them and both were with Jesus along with Simon, when Jesus raised Jairus' daughter. They were present during the Transfiguration and also in the Gethsemane garden during the Master's agony.

St. James is believed to have preached the Gospel in various places including Judea, Samaria and going far off to Spain. St. James is the first of the Apostles to be martyred. In Acts it is recorded that James was killed by the sword of Herod in Jerusalem in A.D. 44. Tradition claims that in the 9<sup>th</sup> century, the mortal remains of the Saint were brought to Spain from Jerusalem and a shrine was erected to venerate the Saint.

### John

St. John is affectionately known as the 'Apostle of Love', probably because he is considered to be the Apostle, Jesus loved most. He is the Son of Zebedee and Salome, and





*Russian Orthodox icon of the  
Apostle and Evangelist John*

brother of James, and was the youngest disciple. John was the only disciple who stood at the foot of the cross during the Lord's crucifixion and had the privilege and honor of being entrusted by the Master to care for the

Blessed Mother. He fulfilled the great responsibility entrusted to him by the Lord on the cross, being a son to the Holy Virgin Mary, caring for her and serving her.

St. John mainly lived and worked in Ephesus. He was tortured and persecuted and finally exiled to the Island of Patmos by the Emperor Domitian, from where he wrote the Book of Revelation. He also wrote the fourth Gospel and three epistles. He was the only Apostle to die naturally. Peter, James and John are considered as the Pillars of the Church in Jerusalem.

St. John is identified as the author of several New Testament works: the Gospel of John, the Epistles of John, and the Book of Revelation. When Jesus called the disciples to follow him, they left their traditional jobs and followed him. He calls us today to become his true disciples, so that the work he began in the Kingdom of God may continue through us.

### ***Verse For Memorization***

*"Whoever wants to become the first among you must serve all of you like a slave. Mk. 10 : 44.*



## CLASS 6

### **I. Answer the questions**

- a. Where was Andrew and Peter when Jesus called them?
- b. Name the sons of Zebedee?
- c. How did Peter die?
- d. When do we observe the feast of St. Peter ?
- e. How did Andrew die?
- f. How many books were written by St. John ? Name them.
- g. Who are the Pillars of the Church in Jerusalem?

### **II. Match the following :**

a. Peter	Book of Revelation
b. Boanerges	first disciple to come to Jesus
c. Apostle of Love	James
d. Island of Patmos	John
e. Andrew	Rock
f. First Apostle to be martyred	Sons of Thunder

### **III. Activity**

- A. Find out the gospel where Jesus is called 'Lamb of God'
- B. Look at the map and see where Sea of Galilee is.

### **Prayer**

Oh! God, You are the Good Shepherd and we are the sheep. Help us to grow in Your Grace. Like the disciples who dedicated their lives to their Master, help us to submit our lives to you. Fill in us Your Spirit, so that we may gain courage and strength to spread your kingdom. We give glory to you for ever and ever, Amen.



## LESSON 10

### THE FIRST DISCIPLES – LEVI, PHILIP AND NATHANIEL

(Mt. 9:9-13, Mk. 2:13-17, Lk. 5:27 – 31, Jn. 1:43-50)

In the next few lessons, we shall learn about some people who got the divine call from God. Some of them are among the twelve disciples of Jesus Christ. But we come across many people in the Bible who received the divine call but were not included as disciples.

#### **Levi (Mathew)**

Born in Nazareth as the son of Alphai, Levi (Mathew) was well-educated, wealthy and well versed in Greek, Hebrew, Latin and Aramaic Languages. Once again, Jesus went out beside the lake of Galilee and on his way saw Mathew, the tax collector sitting at the tax booth. No one liked tax collectors, for often they took more money than they were supposed to collect. In some gospels Mathew is also referred as Levi son of Alpheus. Jesus calls him to follow him and Mathew leaves the tax booth and follows him. Here we can see the joy Mathew experienced on being called to be Jesus'

disciple. He is grateful for this choice made by Jesus because being a tax collector he was hated by most people. In his happiness he gives a dinner to Jesus and his disciples and invites his friends and other sinners to witness the presence of Jesus Christ.

St. Mathew wrote the first Gospel including the most complete account of the Sermon on the Mount. The Gospel of St. Mathew is characterized by an emphasis on Jesus as the fulfillment of Jewish Messianic hopes, and by a special interest in his human genealogy. St. Mathew led an ascetic life, and preached in Palestine, Judea, Syria, Ethiopia and Persia. The tradition claims that while he was preaching, he is said to have been martyred in A.D. 60.

#### **Philip**

He was born in Bethsaida in Galilee and probably was an early follower of St. John the Baptist. From Bethsaida, Philip received his call to



## CLASS 6

---

follow Jesus. He is considered as a disciple of unquestioned devotion and unchallenged faith. It is recorded in the Gospel of St. John that Philip was present with his master at the feeding of the five thousand men. He was asked by Lord Jesus as to how much money would be required to feed the crowd and he replied it would cost over 200 silver coins for everyone to have even a little. He recognized Jesus as the one foretold by Moses as the Messiah. He was so happy that when the Messiah called him, he ran to his friend Nathaniel and told him that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah.

The most convincing tradition of Philip's later life is that he preached in Greece and the tradition claims that the wicked pagans seized Philip and crucified him upside down on a tree. He is believed to have been buried in Hierapolis and his relics were transferred to Rome.

### **Nathaniel (Bartholomew)**

Nathaniel was from Cana, and Philip's closest friend. Initially Nathaniel could not believe that something good like the Messiah can come from a place like Nazareth. But when Philip insists, he goes to see Jesus. When Jesus greets him and says that

"I saw you sitting under the fig tree before Philip called you" Nathaniel realizes that only Jesus can be the Son of God and calls him 'Rabbi'-meaning, the teacher. He was the only Apostle about whom Jesus says "A true Israelite, in whom there is no deceit".

Nathaniel used to sit under the fig tree and study the Scripture. His other name was Bartholomew. The tradition claims that in A.D. 68, while Nathaniel was preaching in Armenia, he was flogged alive and beheaded, crucified and tied in a sack and thrown in the sea.

### **God's call changes People**

When Jesus called Levi and Philip, both of them willingly followed him realizing that in spite of being sinners they were called to be his disciples. This incident shows that Jesus chooses even people who are sinners and hated by others to be his disciple. He gives them a chance to repent and follow him, a chance that Mathew got. He chooses those who believe in the word of God, like Philip and also those who need proof to believe like Nathaniel.

In both Mathew and Philip we saw their willingness to share the joy. Mathew calls the disciples, friends



and even sinners to share the dinner in the presence of Jesus. Philip runs to his friend Nathaniel to share the good news of the coming of the Messiah.

We too have a chance to be called by God to become his disciple. When we experience that joy and grace we should be willing to share the good news with others.

### Verse For Memorization

*"The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few"* Mt. 9:37

### I. Answer the Questions

- a. Name the tax collector chosen by Jesus to be his disciple? Why was he hated by all?
- b. Why did Nathaniel call Jesus 'Rabbi'?
- c. What was the compliment given by Jesus to Nathaniel?
- d. How is the Gospel of St. Mathew characterized?

### II. Fill in the blanks

- a. Nathaniel was the best friend of \_\_\_\_\_.
- b. \_\_\_\_\_ used to sit under the fig tree and study the Scripture.
- c. The other name of Nathaniel \_\_\_\_\_.

### III. Activity

- A. Ask the students to write a song (minimum four lines) in any language about the call of God/ Discipleship.
- B. Can we live as a disciple of Jesus in our daily life? Discuss.
- C. Find out where these three disciples are mentioned in John's Gospel.

### Prayer

Our heavenly Father, we are knocking at your door. Bless us and keep us under your mighty arms. Protect us from all troubles and tribulations. Preserve us in Thy Holiness all the days of our lives, Amen.



## LESSON 11

# THE COST OF DISCIPLESHIP – THE YOUNG RICH MAN

(Mt. 19:16-30, Mk. 10: 17-23, Lk. 18:18-30)

Having learnt about Simon, Andrew, James, John, Levi, Philip and Nathanael, let us know what is the meaning of 'The cost of discipleship'? It is not that easy to follow God. When Jesus called the disciples they left everything and followed him.

### Being a Disciple-Becoming a New Person

The cost of discipleship means that we should always be ready to shed our old habits, in order to become a new person. That is what Christ wants us to be. Christ asked his disciples to do three things:-

1. to abandon all the worldly things
2. to immerse themselves into a life of constant ministry and
3. to depend on God and no one else for their resources.

Let us read what Jesus had said when the rich man asked what he should do to inherit eternal life.

### Wealth and Discipleship

Once a rich man asked Jesus, "Good teacher, What must I do to inherit eternal life"? Jesus answered. "You know the commandments". "Do not commit adultery, do not murder, do not steal, do not give false testimony and honour your father and mother". The rich man said, "All these I have kept since I was a boy". When Jesus heard this, He said to him, "You still lack one thing. Sell

### *Camel through the eye of a needle*

*"It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God". This is a Jewish proverb commonly used to express difficulty or impossibility. In the large gates of the city walls were small narrow gates, each called the 'needle's eye' through which a camel might pass kneeling down only if it was unloaded.*

*This is used here as a colourful image for a near impossible task.*



everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come and follow me”.

When the rich man heard this, he became very sad, because he was a man of great wealth. Jesus looked at him and said, “How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God! Indeed, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God”. Those who heard this asked, “Who then can be saved?” Jesus replied, “What is impossible with men is possible with God”. Then Peter said to Jesus, “We have left all we had to follow you”. Jesus said to them, “Everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or fields for my sake will receive a hundred times more and will be given eternal life”.

### **Ready to give up worldly comforts to become a Disciple of Jesus**

The Kingdom of God is far more important than anything else in the

world. We should know the cost of discipleship and then make the decision. We may have to give up worldly comfort and security. If we have worldly possessions we should be willing to give it up for the sake of the Kingdom of God. And then we will have to rework all our priorities in life. For example if there is a party and the Holy Qurbana, our priority should be to attend the Holy Qurbana. The worldly things should come only after the spiritual things.

We have seen from the previous lessons that the Disciples gave up their lives for the heavenly kingdom. Our Great Fathers like Parumala Thirumeni, Pulikkottil Thirumeni, Vattasseril Thirumeni, Pampadi Thirumeni, etc. had led a life of real discipleship. We all must remember – following Jesus is number one. Follow Jesus no matter what the cost. **Follow him from today’.**

### ***Verse For Memorization***

*“It is much harder for a rich person to enter the Kingdom of God than for a camel to go through the eye of a needle”.* Mt.19 : 24

### **I. Answer the questions**

- a. Explain the cost of discipleship?
- b. What are the three things Jesus asked his disciples to do?



## CLASS 6

---

- c. Why did the rich man become very sad?
- d. What are the rewards for those who have left everything to follow Jesus ?

### II. Who said to whom :

- a. "Good teacher, What must I do to inherit eternal life"?
- b. "How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God!"
- c. "We have left all we had to follow you"

### III. Fill in the blanks

- a. Do not commit \_\_\_\_\_.
- b. It is easier for a \_\_\_\_\_ to go through the eye of a needle.
- c. "What is \_\_\_\_\_ with men is possible with God.
- d. The worldly things should come only after the \_\_\_\_\_ things.
- e. Sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have \_\_\_\_\_.

### IV. Activity

- A. You are a student. Is it possible to become a disciple of Jesus being a student? Discuss in the class.
- B. Ask the students to talk or write about a person they like the most (can be anybody: parents, teachers, other relatives, friends or anybody else). They should explain the good qualities of that person and the reason why they like him/her.

### Prayer

Dear Lord, help us to lead the life of a real disciple. You are everything in our lives. We believe that whatever we leave for your sake, will be our treasure in heaven. Be with us all the time. Amen.



## LESSON 12

# THE COST OF DISCIPLESHIP – ZACCHÆUS

(Lk. 19:1 - 9)

We have come across the word discipleship in some of the previous lessons, so by now you all know what is discipleship! It means to take up your cross and follow Jesus. This seems a difficult option for many people in the present world. But there are many who follow Jesus after giving up all the worldly luxuries they enjoy.

### **Zacchaeus wants to see Jesus**

Let us learn about a man who accepted Jesus as his Saviour. Zacchaeus was a tax collector lived in Jericho. We have seen in the previous lesson that no one liked tax collectors, for often they took more money than they were supposed to and kept it for themselves.

Zacchaeus was a very rich man, and he was very short. When Jesus came to Jericho, Zacchaeus wanted to see him, but the crowd was so large that poor Zacchaeus could not see over their heads. Then he had an idea. "I'll climb a tree" he thought. "then I can surely see Jesus".

So he ran ahead of the crowd and climbed up a sycamore tree. Now he was higher than anyone else and could see Jesus easily. He was pleased to have had such a good idea.

### **Jesus calls Zacchaeus**

Along came Jesus and the crowd, and suddenly, to Zacchaeus' surprise, Jesus looked right up into the tree and saw him! "Hurry down, Zacchaeus," Jesus said, "for I'm coming to your house".

Zacchaeus was astonished but he scrambled down from the tree and rushed home so that he could welcome Jesus. Some of the people watching started to grumble. "What's this? Jesus is going to the house of a man who is a sinner?!"

### **Zacchaeus becomes a new person**

Meanwhile Jesus had arrived at Zacchaeus' house. When Jesus looked at him, Zacchaeus knew how wrong he



## CLASS 6

had been in the past to take more taxes than he should. He decided then and to change his ways. He said to Jesus, "I will give half of all my belongings to the poor, and if I have cheated anyone in the past, I will pay him back four times as much as I took from him".

Jesus said to him, "Salvation has come to this house today, for this man, also is a descendant of Abraham. I came to seek and save those who had lost the right way to live".

We can understand that Zacchaeus was saved because he had the desire to see the Lord and mend his ways. He was short and probably he would not have seen Jesus if he stood in the crowd. So he took special effort to have a glimpse of Jesus. He realized the mistakes he had committed in the past and repented them.

This is what Jesus Christ is expecting from each one of us. We need to take a decision and make special efforts in our lives to see Jesus.





We have to surrender everything to our Lord. Then we will receive all the goodness in our life. When we make a decision to see Jesus and special effort for this, Jesus will surely come to our lives and make great changes.

### *Verse For Memorization*

*People who are well do not need a doctor, but only those who are sick. I did not come to call good people, but to call sinners". Mk. 2: 17.*

### **I. Answer the Questions**

- a. What is discipleship?
- b. Why was Zacchaeus saved?
- c. What hinders us from being saved?
- d. How can we be saved?
- e. What did Zacchaeus promise to do to mend his ways?

### **II. Fill in the blanks**

- a. Zacchaeus climbed up the \_\_\_\_\_ tree to see the Lord
- b. Zacchaeus was a \_\_\_\_\_ and lived in \_\_\_\_\_.
- c. \_\_\_\_\_ has come to this house today.
- d. The Son of Man came to seek and to save the \_\_\_\_\_.

### **III. Activity**

- A. Enact the conversation between Jesus Christ and Zacchaeus.
- B. Have a discussion of the story with the students and ask them whether they realize any shortcoming in them which they may like to repent to God.

### **Prayer**

Our Heavenly Father, we come unto your feet, thank You for protecting us throughout our lives. We repent our sins. We confess that only you can forgive our sins. We give glory to you now and for ever, Amen.



## LESSON 13

# ST. THOMAS, THE DISCIPLE OF CHRIST

(Jn.11:16, Jn.20:28)

We have learned about some of the disciples of Jesus Christ. In this lesson we are going to learn about St. Thomas, one of the twelve disciples of Christ and the Apostle of India.

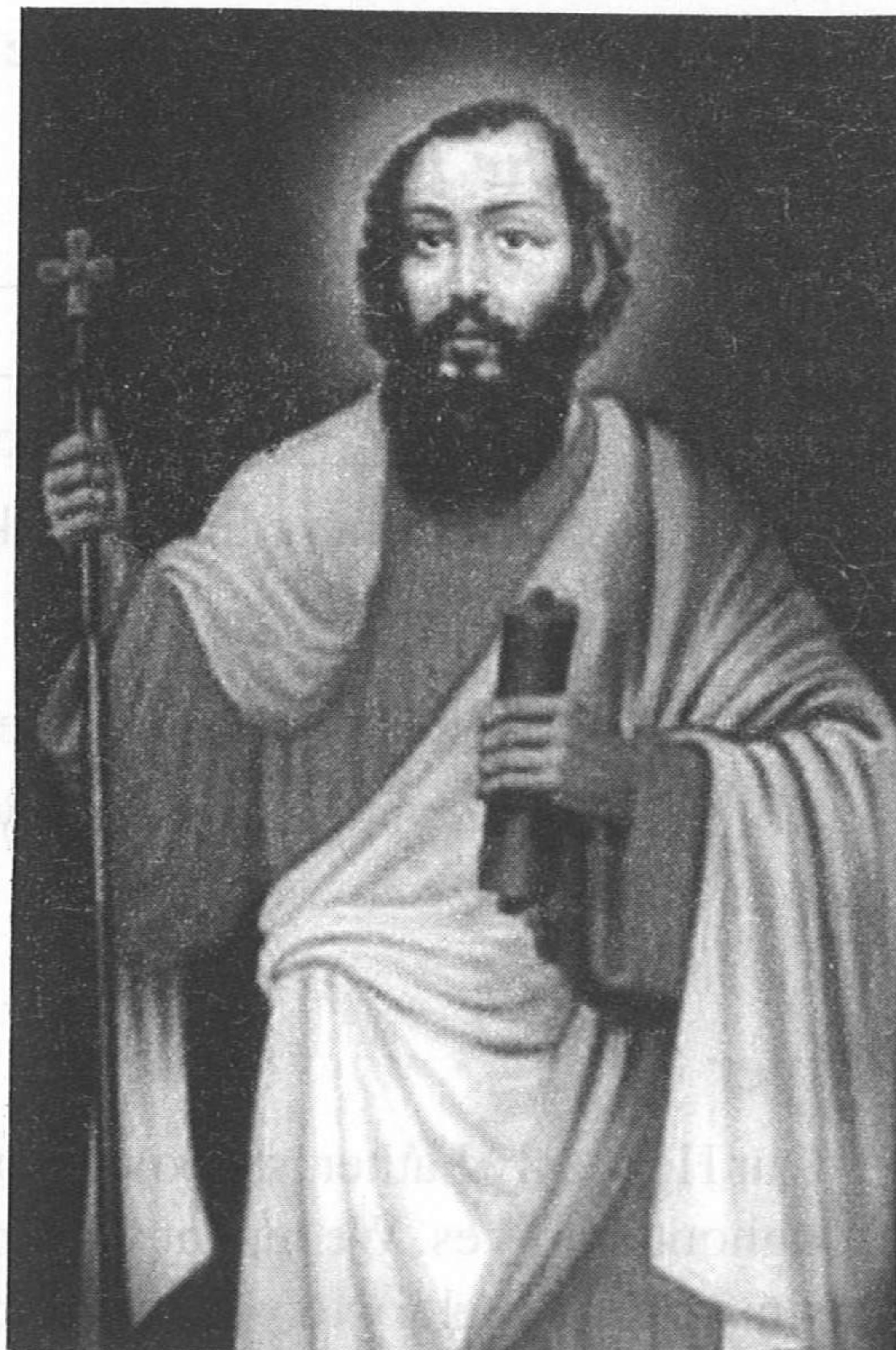
Thomas was a carpenter from Galilee. He was surnamed Didymus (*in Greek*), the twin. There are varying reasons given for this nickname. The tradition says two fingers of his right hand were joined together from his birth.

### Three special Qualities

Many details about his profession etc. are not seen in the Holy Scriptures. However three qualities of St. Thomas are mentioned in the Holy Bible.

- (i) He was genuinely committed to Jesus. Thomas expressed this when he strongly declared to go and die with his master at the raising of Lazarus. He said to the other disciples, "Let us also go that we may die with him" (Jn. 11:16).
- (ii) He is the first to confess Christ's

divinity after the resurrection. When the Lord appeared for the first time to the disciples after resurrection, Thomas was not there. Even though the other Apostles told Thomas that Lord Jesus had appeared to them, he





answered, "Unless I put my hands in his side.. I will not believe". So he earned the surname, 'Doubting Disciple'. When he saw Christ and was invited to touch His wounds, Thomas fell before him, full of faith and cried, "My Lord and My God" (Jn. 20:28). He is thus the

***Churches founded by  
St. Thomas the Apostle***

*Kollam.*

*Niranam*

*Palur*

*Chayal (Nilakkal)*

*Kodungalloor (cranganore)*

*Paravur*

*Gokamangalam*

*He erected a Cross at  
Thiruvithamcode (South of  
Trivandrum), which is known as  
'Arajan's church' (in short  
Arappally)*

first to confess Jesus' divinity explicitly. Tradition says that Thomas' twin fingers were separated when he touched the wounds of Jesus Christ, and all the other disciples kissed his hand.



*St. Thomas Cross*

(iii) He was the beloved of his master and he enjoyed all freedom with his master. That is why Thomas asked Lord Jesus, "We do not know where you are going, then how would we know the way"? Immediately our Lord told Thomas, "I am the way, the truth and the life".(Jn. 14:5-6)

Whenever Thomas felt any doubt he never hesitated to disclose it.

**Missionary works of St. Thomas in India**

From the book titled 'The Acts of Thomas' we can understand the



## CLASS 6



*The Thiruvithancode church or Thiruvithamcode Arappally- (locally known as "Thomayar kovil") is one of the ancient churches established by the Apostle St. Thomas in A.D 63.*

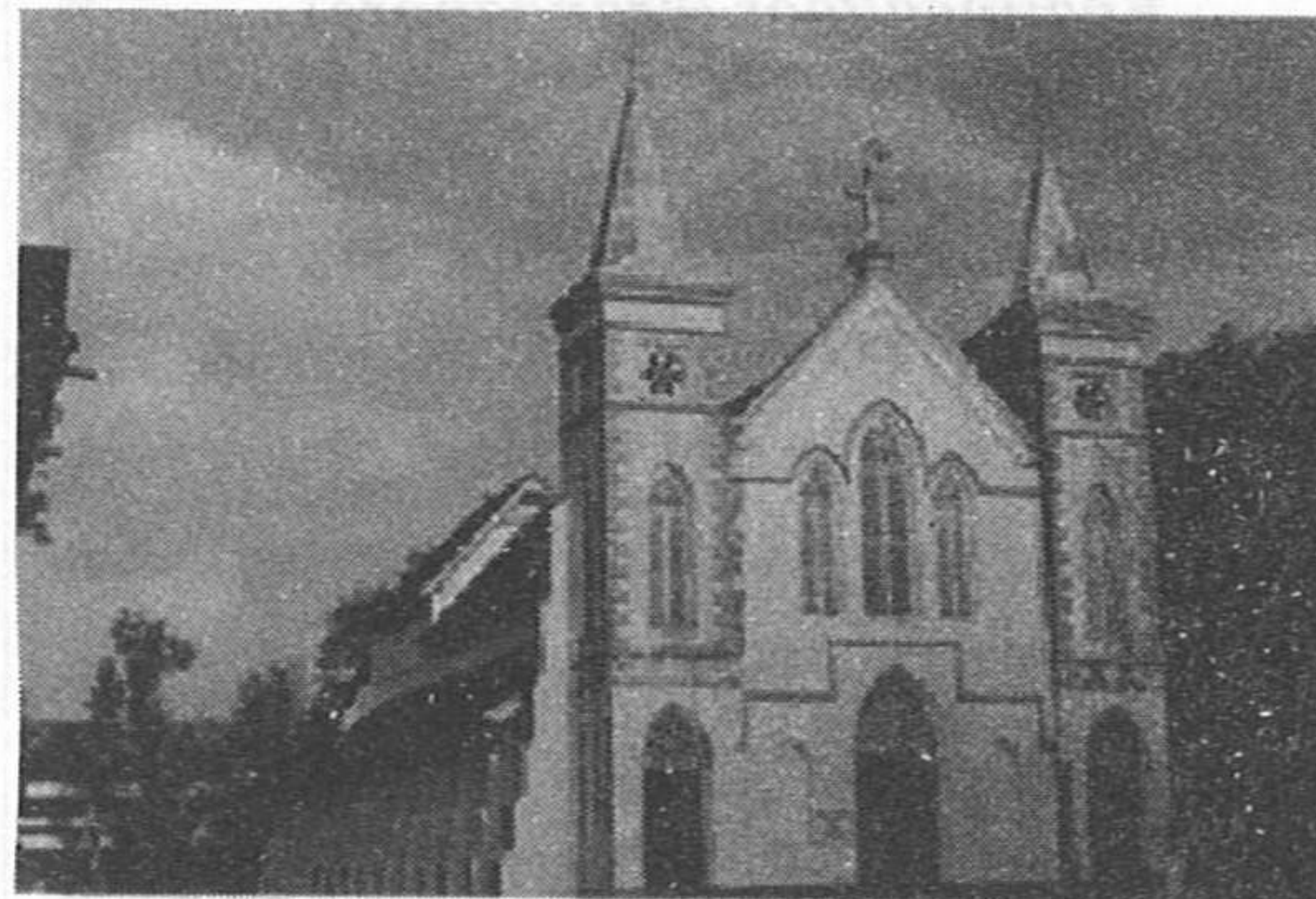
missionary activities of St. Thomas in India. St. Thomas landed at Kodungalloor (Cranganore) in Kerala in A.D. 52. The Apostle is said to have begun preaching the Gospel to the already existing Jewish settlers in the Malabar coast and to other local people of Aryan worships and the Jains. He preached among the Malabaries (people of Malabar) and many Brahmin families became Christians. He established churches at seven places. St. Thomas ordained bishops from four Brahmin Families; Pakalomattom, Sankarapuri, Kalli and Kaliyankal.

There are many other stories related to the evangelic activities of St.

Thomas in North India. You have already learned those stories in Class 5.

### **Martyrdom of St. Thomas**

It is believed that St. Thomas went to China and preached the Gospel. When he returned from his journey, he was stabbed to death at a place now known as St. Thomas Mount near Mylapore in Chennai (Madras) on 18<sup>th</sup> December A.D. 72, and he breathed his last on 21<sup>st</sup> December A.D. 72. He was buried there. His remains were taken to Edessa in Persia in the fourth century.



*Niranam Valiapally (St. Mary's Niranam Valiapally (St. Mary's Orthodox Syrian Church, Niranam), is a parish under the Niranam diocese of the Malankara Orthodox Syrian Church. This church was founded by St. Thomas (Mar Thoma), the Apostle of Jesus Christ, in AD 54. The present building, supposedly the fourth, was constructed in 1912 and was renovated during the year 2000*



### Feasts of St. Thomas

The Indian (Malankara) Orthodox Church observes two feast days of St. Thomas. One is on December 21, the day when St. Thomas died. The other is on July 3, the day on which his relics are believed to have been transported from Mylapore, a place along the coast of the Marina Beach in Chennai to the city of Edessa in Mesopotamia. Our church celebrated

the centenary celebration of the martyrdom of St. Thomas in 1972.

St. Thomas was succeeded by Church Fathers, who over the centuries have handed over our Church to us as it is today. Many divisions have taken place in our church due to the colonization by the Portuguese and the British. Indian Orthodox church follows the undivided tradition and faith of the Church founded by St. Thomas.

### Verse For Memorization

*"I am the way, the truth and the life. The only way to the Father is through me". Jn. 14:6.*

### I. Answer the Questions

- a. Who is the Apostle of India?
- b. Which are the three main qualities of St. Thomas mentioned in the Bible?
- c. Which are the seven churches established by St. Thomas?
- d. When do we celebrate the martyrdom of St. Thomas?
- e. Name the families from where St. Thomas ordained Bishops?

### II. Fill in the blanks

- a. Thomas was a \_\_\_\_\_ from Galilee.
- b. St. Thomas also erected a Cross at \_\_\_\_\_ which is known as Arappalli (Arajan's Church).



## CLASS 6

---

- c. St. Thomas was stabbed to death at a place now known as \_\_\_\_\_ near Mylapore.

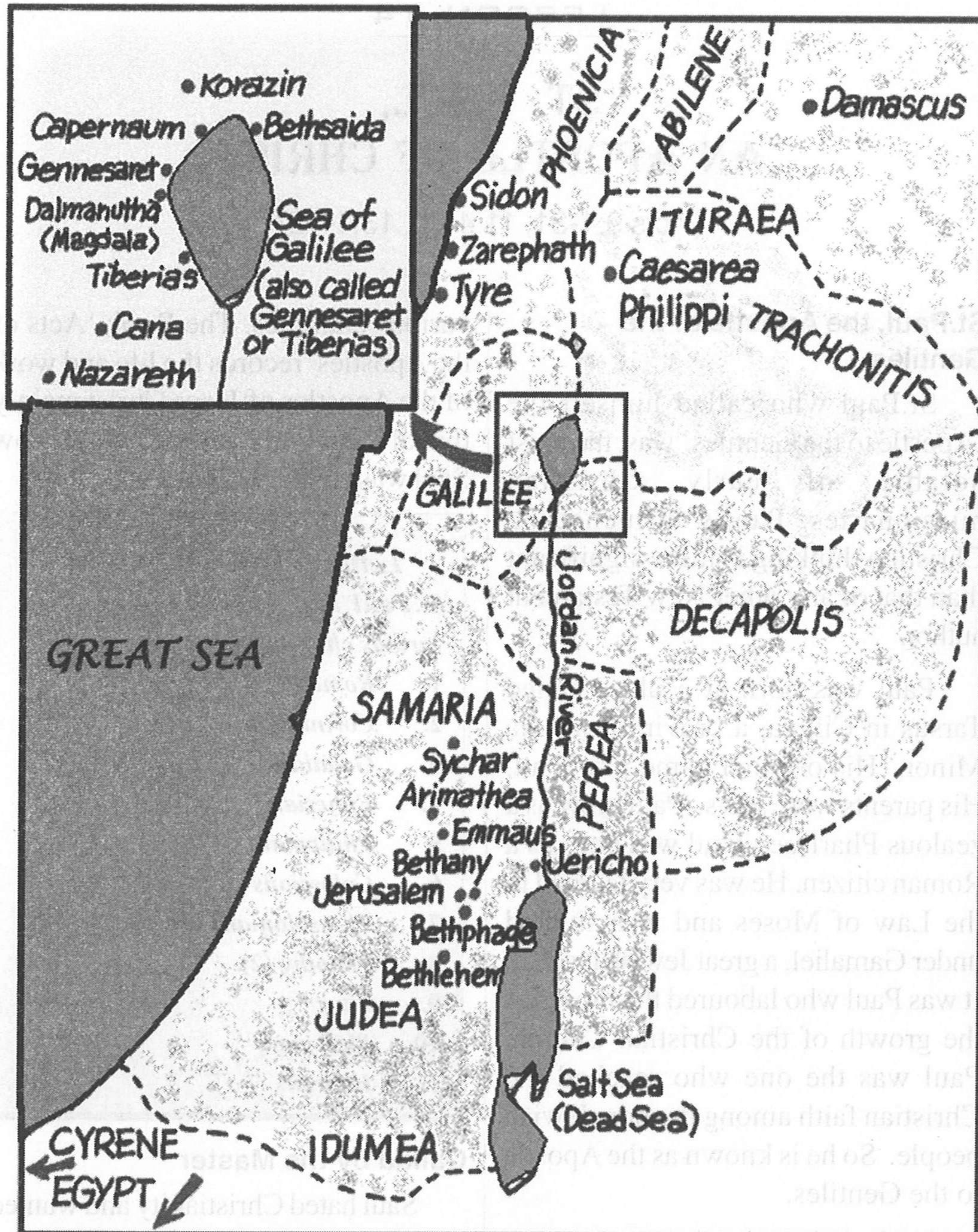
### III. Activity

- Find out the Biblical passages that refer to St. Thomas.
- Draw a map of India and mark the places where St. Thomas founded churches.
- Recollect the story based on the North Indian tradition of St. Thomas
- If you have ever visited Niranam church or Thiruvithamcode church, write a brief note about it and share your experience in the class.

### Prayer

“Dear Lord, we the Sunday school students come unto your feet. Give us your strength and courage. Like St. Thomas who confessed you in the midst of the disciples, we also confess you in the midst of the world, that you are our Lord and our God for ever and ever, Amen.





*Important places where Jesus did the ministry*



## LESSON 14

# ST. PAUL, AN APOSTLE OF CHRIST

(Acts 9:1-31, 11:4-30, 13:1-12)

### St. Paul, the Apostle of the Gentiles

St. Paul who called himself the 'Apostle to the Gentiles' was, the most notable of early Christian missionaries. Paul's influence on Christian thinking is more significant than that of any other New Testament author.

Paul was born at a place called Tarsus in Cilicia, a province in Asia Minor. His original name was Saul. His parents were Jews. Paul grew as a zealous Pharisee. Paul was born as a Roman citizen. He was very learned in the Law of Moses and was studied under Gamaliel, a great Jewish teacher. It was Paul who laboured the most, for the growth of the Christian Church. Paul was the one who reached the Christian faith among the non-Jewish people. So he is known as the Apostle to the Gentiles.

In the New Testament, we see that he had written fourteen letters to

various churches. The Book 'Acts of the Apostles' records the life and work of the Apostles of Jesus Christ mainly that of Peter and Paul. Let us see, how Saul was called by God.

### *Letters written by St. Paul*

*St. Paul had written 14 letters to various churches:*

1. *Roman*
2. *Corinthians (2)*
3. *Galatians*
4. *Ephesians*
5. *Philippians*
6. *Colossians*
7. *Thessalonians (2)*
8. *Timothy (2)*
9. *Titus*
10. *Philemon*
11. *Hebrews*

### Called by the Master

Saul hated Christianity and wanted to destroy Christians. When Stephen, the first martyr of the Christian Church



was killed, it was Saul, at whose feet the witnesses against Stephen placed their garments. After the death of Stephen, many Christians in Jerusalem fled to Damascus and other places. Damascus was a city of Syria situated 140 miles away from Jerusalem at the foot of Mt. Hermon. Saul wanted to persecute the Christians in Damascus. For this he got orders from the authorities giving him power to arrest the Christians.

When Saul reached near Damascus, a strange incident happened, which completely changed his life. He saw a very bright light coming from the sky and flashing all around him. This light blinded his eyes and he fell down. He heard a voice saying to him "Saul, Saul, Why do you persecute me"? Saul asked "Who are you Lord"? The voice said, "I am Jesus whom you are persecuting". When Saul got up from the ground, his eyes were open but he could not see. His companions led him to Damascus and he remained in the house of a man named Judas for three days.

In Damascus, there was a disciple of Christ named Ananias. The Lord appeared to him in a dream and he was told to go to Saul and heal him of his blindness. Ananias went there and laid



his hands upon him and prayed and baptized him. Immediately Saul regained his sight. Saul then changed his name to Paul.

#### **Paul became a missionary**

After his conversion, Paul was introduced to the Apostles by Barnabas, an active Christian worker in Antioch. Barnabas brought Paul to Antioch and there, along with other Christians they preached the gospel. In those days, a great famine broken out in Jerusalem. The faithful in Antioch undertook a money collection and sent it to the Church in Jerusalem, through Barnabas and Paul. After the mission in



## CLASS 6

Jerusalem, Barnabas and Paul returned to Antioch.

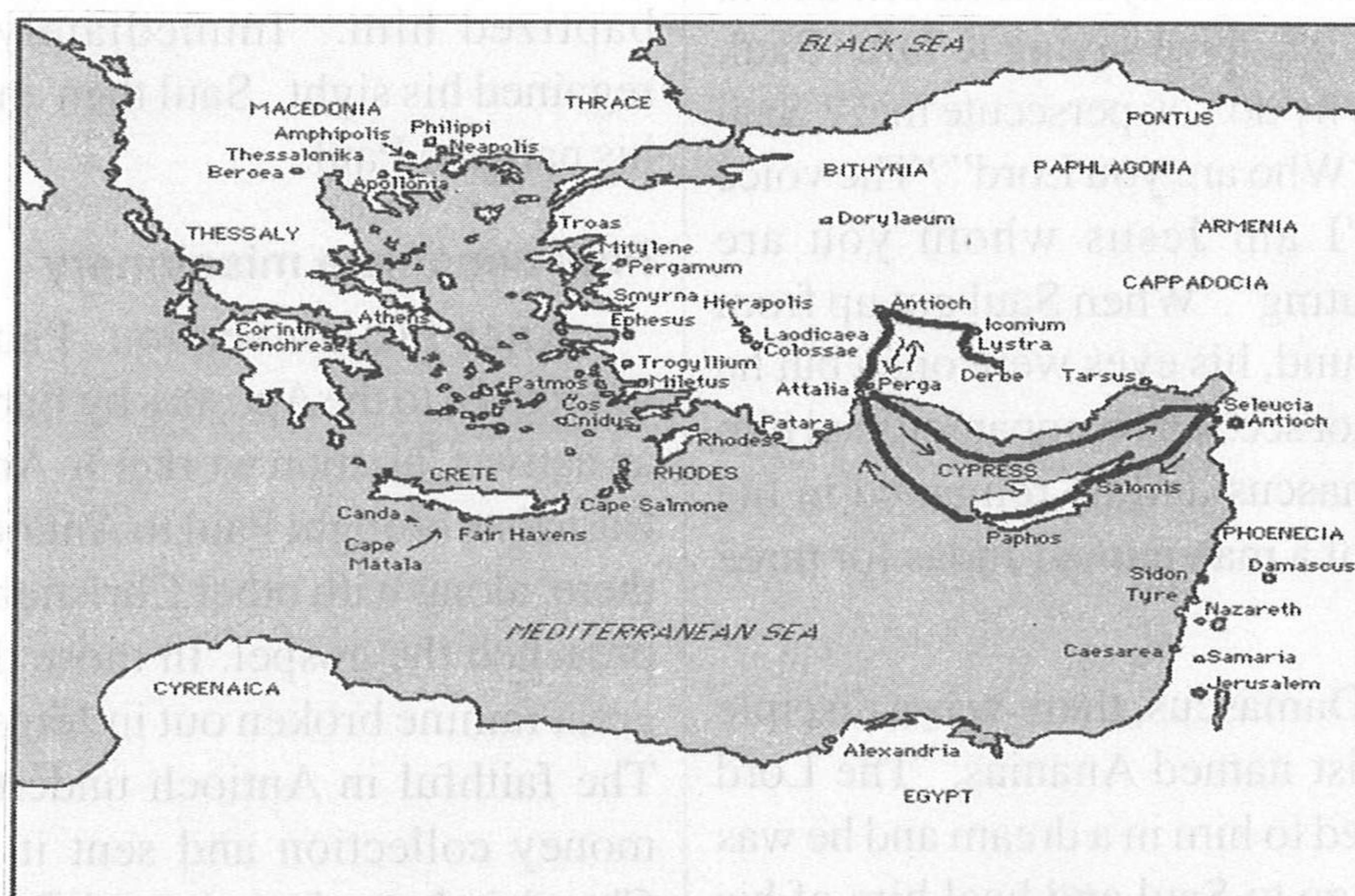
### Missionary journey's of Paul

Paul had undertaken three missionary journeys.

During the first missionary journey, Paul preached the gospel in Cyprus, Asia-Minor (present Turkey) and Greece. John named Mark and Barnabas accompanied him. They went through the whole island, preaching the gospel and reached Paphos. From Paphos they sailed to perga in Pamphylia, there John Mark left Barnabas and Paul. Paul preached in their synagogues and converted Jews and Gentiles to Christianity.

In the second missionary journey, instead of Barnabas, Silas was his companion. They started their journey from Antioch. He visited Asia – Minor again. Timothy also became Paul's co-worker. Later on Paul and his companions set out for Europe and they reached Philipi. There, a woman named Lydia believed in Christ and got baptized. Lydia was the first Christian in Europe. Paul founded Churches in cities like Thessalonica, Corinth and Athens in Greece.

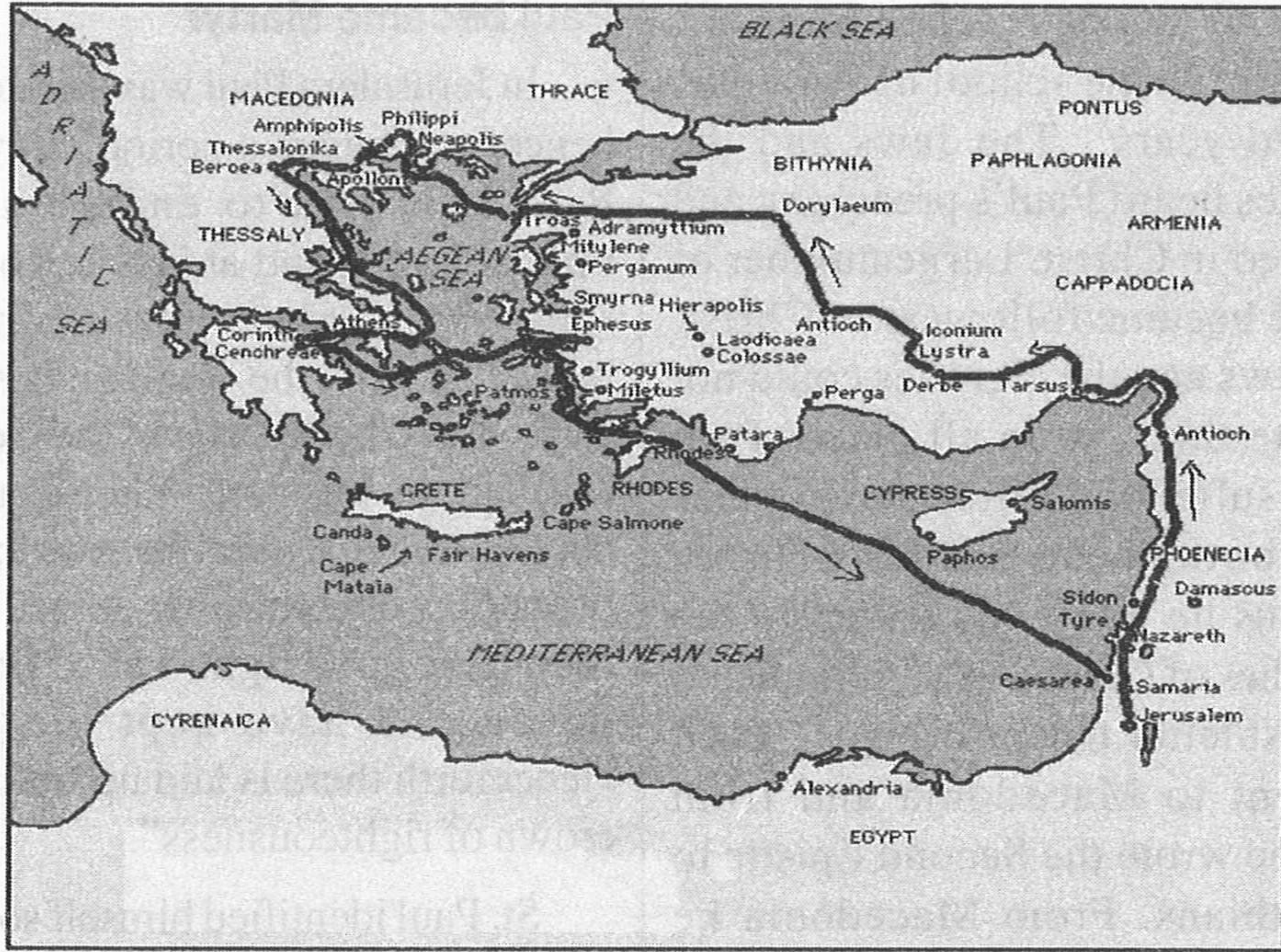
The third missionary journey also began from Antioch. In this journey, Paul had mainly gone to Asia-



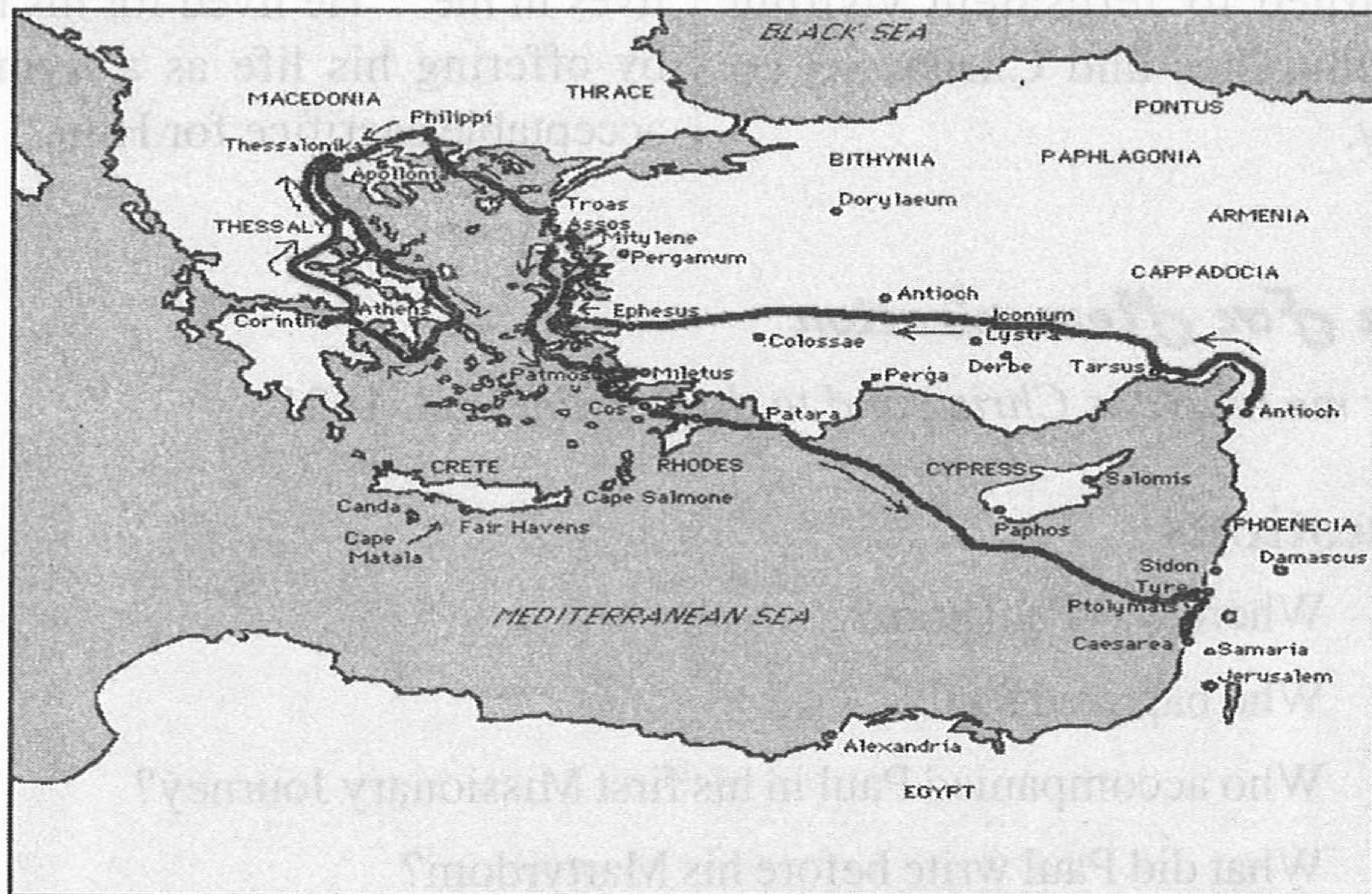
*St. Paul's first missionary journey A. D. 48 to 49*



UNIT II



*St. Paul's second missionary journey A. D. 50 to 54*



*St. Paul's third missionary journey A. D. 54 to 58*



## CLASS 6

---

Minor. When he reached Ephesus, he taught in the school of Tyrannus for two years. The Jews and the Gentiles heard Paul's preaching and believed in Christ. Large number of people became followers of Christ. The Jews and the Gentiles could not tolerate this. So in all places Paul had to suffer opposition and troubles from both these sections. From Ephesus he wrote his letters to the Churches of Galatia and Philippi and the first letter to Corinthians. Then he went to Macedonia and from there he wrote the Second Epistle to Corinthians. From Macedonia he went to Corinth, from where he wrote his letter to Romans. Then he returned to Jerusalem visiting many churches and Christians on the way.

### **Paul became Martyr**

In Jerusalem Paul was arrested and henceforth began a period of trial for Paul. He had to endure a long imprisonment and at last in Rome he suffered martyrdom. He was beheaded in AD. 67 by the Roman Emperor Nero. Thus the Apostle of the Gentiles fulfilled his mission. When Paul was about to be martyred he wrote; "The time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness".

St. Paul identified himself so much with the crucified and risen Lord and he repeatedly says that "it is Christ who lives in me". He lived for his master by offering his life as a living and acceptable sacrifice for Him.

### ***Verse For Memorization***

*For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. Phil. 1: 21*

### **I. Questions**

- a. Where was Paul born?
- b. Who baptized Paul?
- c. Who accompanied Paul in his first Missionary Journey?
- d. What did Paul write before his Martyrdom?
- e. Give a brief account of the incident which changed the life of Saul.



**II. Match the following**

- a. Teacher of Paul - Disciple of Christ in Damascus
- b. Ananias - Introduced Paul to the Apostles
- c. First Martyr of the Christian Church - Gamaliel
- d. Barnabas - St.Paul
- e. Nero - Stephen
- f. Apostle of the Gentiles - Persecuted Paul

**III. Activity**

1. See the map and understand the places St Paul visited during his missionary journeys. Can you identify these places in a present day world map?
2. Read Ps. 119:105 - 112. Meditate on these verses for a few minutes. Can you make a decision on the basis of these verses in your personal life.

**Prayer**

O Lord! our Master, You called the disciples to spread your Gospel and sent them to all over the world. We the Sunday school children are also waiting for your call. Lord God, extend your mighty right hand upon us as we become more courageous to spread your Gospel, Amen.



## LESSON 15

# DISCIPLESHIP: PAINS AND GAINS

(Mt. 16: 24 – 27, Mk. 8: 34 – 35)

### **To become a disciple of Jesus**

Can we become a disciple of Jesus? Jesus came to this world to make everyone his disciples. Jesus said to His disciples *'if any man will come after Me, let him deny himself and take the cross and follow Me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it and whosoever will lose his life for My sake shall find it'* (Mt. 16: 24-27). The entire meaning of discipleship can be found in the above lines. It tells us that there is suffering before glory and sacrifice before reward. We are called to win by losing. God is calling you to give your life for Christ. Therefore we can become the disciple of Christ, only by denying ourselves and carrying his cross and following him.

### **Suffering is a part of discipleship and purification**

The Bible does not demand that we suffer; it just tells us that suffering is inevitable and is to be expected.

Suffering can be a way God test our faith and determination to follow Him. Anyone can claim to be a follower and a disciple of Christ, but the moment we have to face trials and tribulations many of us are ready to change our minds. Suffering is also a part of discipline of purification. Through suffering one reaches the higher qualities of personality.

One will wonder that if the pain of discipleship is so great why anyone should choose this path. This is because the rewards or gains of discipleship are far greater than the pains. 'Our great reward is Jesus Himself and a place in heaven with Him.' God has promised in Rev. 2: 7 *'To him who overcomes, I will give the right to eat from the tree of life which is in the paradise of God'*.

Also in the Sermon on the Mount Jesus says *'Blessed are you when men cast insults at you, persecute you and say all kinds of evil against you*



*falsely on account of Me*'. St. Peter in his first Epistle 1: 3-9 tells us that we will be distressed by various trials to test our faith, but in reward we will obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled. And we will obtain the salvation of our souls as a reward for our faith.

### **How can we follow Jesus?**

These days many people live only for accumulation of more wealth. The purpose of life is not gathering more and more possessions. Jesus illustrates this through the parable of the rich fool. Nobody can serve money and God at the same time. The story of the rich young man who came to Jesus seeking the way to Heaven also reveals this. Our life becomes meaningful only when we work for the heavenly riches.

The way of wholehearted discipleship, is a gloriously rewarding way. Jesus says, "If any man wants to serve me, let him follow me: and where I am, there shall also my servant be." Christians find that this uphill, difficult path, this path of obedience, is the path of close fellowship with Jesus Christ Himself. We have seen from the previous lessons that all the Apostles of Christ carried their cross and suffered persecution for the sake of their Lord. Thus they received the

great reward of the crown of righteousness.

Great multitudes went with Jesus. And He turned and said to them," If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and his own life, he cannot be my disciple". He said that in order to follow Him, we must place our devotion and our love for Him so far ahead of every other worldly thing. We must be willing to follow Him even if it calls for sacrifice, even the sacrifice of our own life.

Discipleship is for the committed, for the consecrated and the dedicated. Discipleship is not for a day, or for a week, or a year. Discipleship is for the rest of our lives. Jesus tells us to understand the gains and loss of being a disciple of Christ and then be willing to follow Him regardless of what we have to let go of and leave behind. He said, "So likewise, whoever of you does not forsake all that, cannot be My disciple."

### **Children, Are you disciples of Christ?**

We have read the stories of the disciples of Christ in the previous lessons. The discipleship has changed their lives. Jesus came to save the



## CLASS 6

---

world from sin. The disciples spread this good news all over the world. We read in Psalms: 'Know that the Lord is God! It is He who made us, and we are His; we are His people and the sheep of His pasture' (100:3). We are children of God. We can also become a disciple of Jesus by following a life according to His will.

Have you made that decision? Are

you a disciple of Christ? We cannot hold on to the world with one hand and on to Jesus with the other. We cannot serve two masters, for we will love one and hate the other. So let us take a decision. Our Great Fathers of the Church followed the path of Christ. Let us also carry the cross of our Lord and dedicate ourselves to Him so that we can inherit the treasure kept for us in heaven.

### ***Verse For Memorization***

*I am sending you out like sheep among wolves. So be as smart as snakes and as innocent as doves. Mt. 10 : 16*

### **I. Answer the Questions**

- a. Who are the blessed according to Jesus Christ?
- b. What did St. Peter say about discipleship?
- c. How can we become the disciple of Christ?
- d. What is the great reward of discipleship?

### **II. Fill in the blanks**

- a. Through \_\_\_\_\_ one reaches the higher qualities of personality.
- b. If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself and take the \_\_\_\_\_ and follow me.
- c. Discipleship is for the \_\_\_\_\_, for the consecrated and \_\_\_\_\_.
- d. To him who overcomes, I will give the right to eat from the \_\_\_\_\_ which is in the \_\_\_\_\_.
- e. We cannot serve two \_\_\_\_\_.



**III. ACTIVITY**

**A. CROSS WORD**

**ACROSS**

1. The Apostle who had natural death
4. Eldest of the disciples
5. The Apostle, who is the friend of Nathaniel
6. Father of Levi
7. The Apostle of India
8. Brother of Peter
9. The Prophet who heard the Lord's voice saying "Who will go for us"?
11. St. Thomas died near to this place.

1		2	3					
			6					
			7					
			8					
11						10		
			9					
4								
5								

**DOWN**

1. Brother of John
2. Emperor who Killed James
3. Apostle who sat under the fig tree
10. Apostle of the Gentiles

**Prayer**

O Almighty God! Preserve us in your faith and holiness, so that we may be filled with your wisdom and strength. Lord, enlighten us and endow us with good virtues and understandings. Bless Thy little Children graciously and extend your mighty hand upon us now and for ever, Amen.



## LESSON - 16

**ST. THOMAS CHRISTIANS  
AND PORTUGUESE MISSION**

When you look around, you can find many churches belonging to various denominations. They belong to the Orthodox, the Marthoma, the Catholic, the CSI, the CNI, and other protestant denominations of the Christian community. There was only one church followed by the disciples of Jesus. You may wonder how all these church denominations came into being. Let us look at the situation in India.

In the previous classes we have learned about the origin of churches in India. St. Thomas, the disciple of Jesus Christ came to India and spread the gospel. He established Christian communities at different places in Kerala. They were known as St. Thomas Christians, Malankara Nazranis, Syrian Christians etc. The head of the St. Thomas Christians was Arch Deacon (Arch de-acon).

The nature and image of the Church in Kerala changed with the arrival of foreign powers in Malankara from 15<sup>th</sup> Century onwards. This resulted in the division in the ONE St. Thomas Christian community. Vasco-de-gama, a Portuguese captain arrived at Kozhikode in 1498 A.D. Priests of the Roman Catholic Church also came along with Gama. They were surprised to learn about the existence of St. Thomas Christians and the growth and strength of the Churches in Malankara.

**The Portuguese Mission**

The arrival of the Portuguese has changed the history of Christians in India. They established trade centres in Cochin and later in Goa and other places in India. Goa was their main headquarters. Though they came to India for trade, gradually they established political authority here. They used this power to get the St.



Thomas Christians under the Roman Catholic Church.

To attract the Syrian Christians, they started a school and a seminary. Thus, there developed two centres of Roman Catholic influence each under different monastic orders in Cochin and Kodungalloor. They promised to give free education and monetary help to the locals. They established a printing press at Kodungalloor to propagate the teachings of the Catholic Church. At that time Malankara Church had its own priests. The head of the Church was called Arch Deacon and the headquarters of the church was at Angamali.

The Portuguese realised that the St. Thomas Christians followed the liturgy and worship of Eastern Syrian Church faith and also that Nestorian from Persia had a strong influence over them. Malankara Church maintained a close contact with the Persian Church and the Bishops from Persia used to visit Malankara. So the Portuguese wanted to introduce the Latin (Western) form of worship to remove the Nestorian influence and bring the St. Thomas Christians under the Pope of Rome. At that time Mar Jacob, the last of the Nestorian Bishops gave into the Latin customs

to some extent. Mar Jacob adopted a policy of expediency. At last Mar Jacob breathed his last under the enforced retirement.

### **Ordeals of Mar Joseph**

Under these circumstances, when Mar Joseph accompanied by Mar Elias came to India in 1556, they had to succumb to the Inquisition of Goa. They were forcibly sent to the Franciscan Monastery of Bassein for eighteen months to learn Latin rites. When they were released in 1558, they reached Cochin and joined the Syrian Christians. The ordeal of Mar Joseph was however not over. He was again sent to Portugal and it is believed that on the way he was murdered.

While Mar Joseph was under bonds, Patriarch Abdisho appointed Mar Abraham as his successor. But he too was soon put under arrest by the Portuguese authorities and sent to Portugal. However, he managed to come back to Angamali. He served the Malankara Church under great pressure from the Archbishop of Goa. He passed away in 1597.

### **Arch Deacon Geevarghese**

Following Mar Abraham, Archdeacon Geevarghese of the Pakalomattom family looked after the



## CLASS 6

---

St. Thomas Christians. He lived in a crucial stage of Church history, for the church was entering a period of virtual physical torture from the Roman

Catholic Church. His period witnessed the arrival of Archbishop Menezes, the Udayamperur Synod and the subsequent rule of Jesuit Archbishops.

### *Verse For Memorization*

*“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you that you also love one another”.* Jn. 13: 34

### **I. Answer the questions**

- Why did the Portuguese want to introduce the Latin form of worship in Malankara?
- Who was the head of the Malankara Church ? Where was its headquarters?
- What are the methods taken by the Portuguese to attract the Syrian Christians?
- When and where did the Portuguese land in Malankara? Who was their leader?

### **II. Fill in the blanks:**

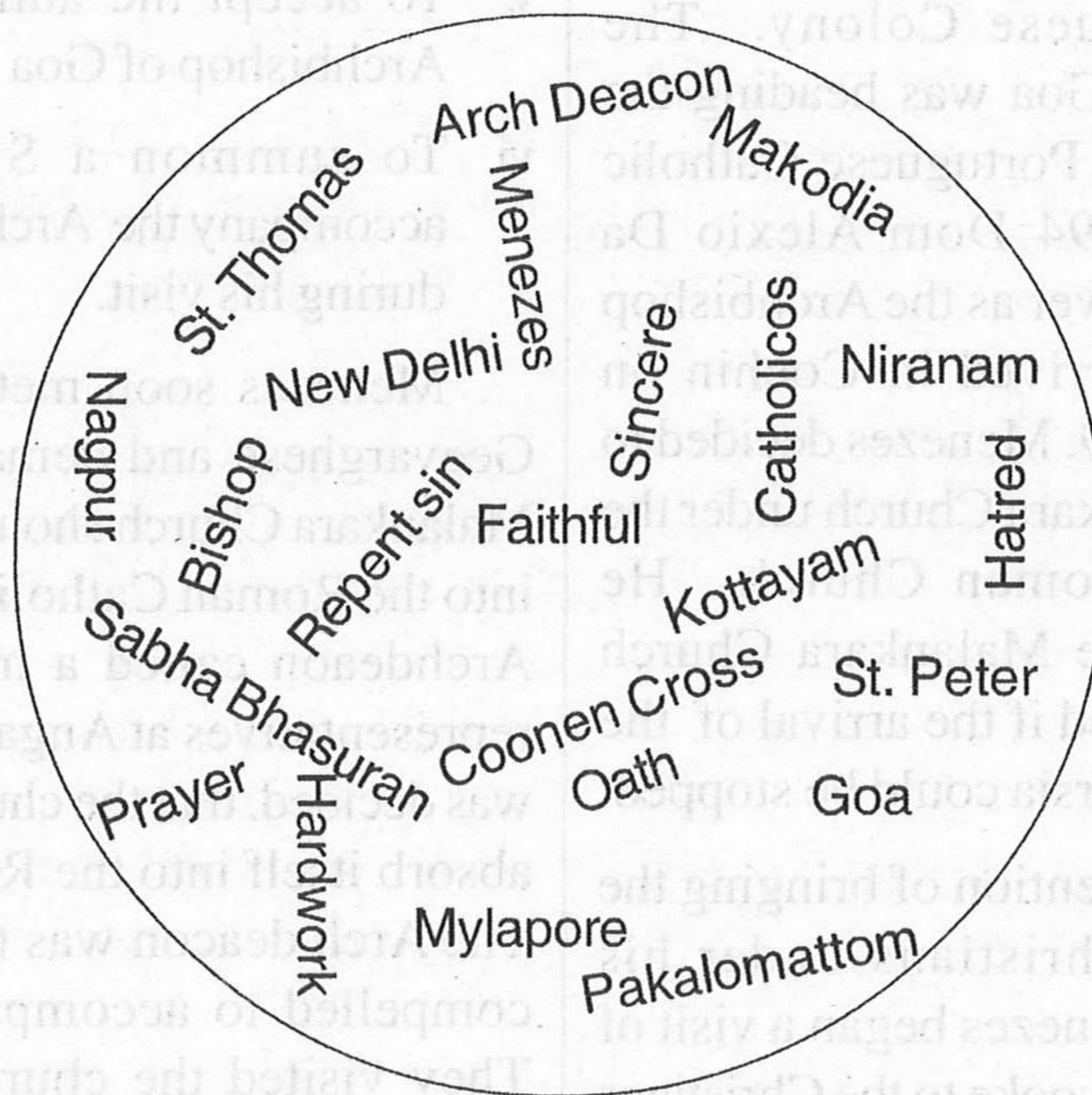
- The \_\_\_\_\_ established their trade centres in Cochin and later in Goa and other places in India.
- The Portuguese developed two centres of Roman Catholic influence each under different monastic orders in \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
- While Mar Joseph was under bonds, Patriarch \_\_\_\_\_ appointed Mar Abraham as his successor.
- Following Mar Abraham, Archdeacon \_\_\_\_\_ of the family looked after the St. Thomas Christians.



### III. Activity

Locate the corresponding items for the following statements in the circle below:

1. Vattasseryl Thirumeni is known by this name
2. The Head quarters of Indian Orthodox Church is located here.
3. Arch Deacons belonged to this family
4. The title of Supreme head of Indian Orthodox Church
5. He was the Arch Bishop of Goa
6. A quality that every student possess



*Can you suitably identify remaining items inside the circle in connection with church and faith?*

### Prayer

Our Heavenly Father, We thank you for sending St. Thomas, your disciple to our country. Help us to keep the same faith and traditions which we received from our great Fathers. We submit our Church unto you and we pray for our Catholicos and all the other Bishops who are guiding us in the Church. We praise your name for ever and ever, Amen.



## LESSON 17

### SYNOD OF DIAMPER

#### Arch Bishop of Goa arrives at Cochin

We have seen in the previous lesson that Goa was the headquarters of the Portuguese Colony. The Archbishop of Goa was heading the activities of the Portuguese Catholic Priests. In 1594 Dom Alexio Da Menezes took over as the Archbishop of Goa. He arrived in Cochin on February 1, 1599. Menezes decided to bring the Malankara Church under the yoke of the Roman Church. He thought that the Malankara Church could be subdued if the arrival of the bishops from Persia could be stopped.

With the intention of bringing the St. Thomas Christians under his jurisdiction, Menezes began a visit of the parishes. He spoke to the Christians and their Priests against the heretical Nestorians and their practices. Menezes wanted to undertake a series of changes in the Church such as:-

- i. To renounce the errors in the Nestorian teachings
- ii. To make correction in liturgical texts

- iii. To promise obedience to the Pope of Rome
- iv. To refuse the Patriarch of Babylon
- v. To accept the authority of the Archbishop of Goa
- vi. To summon a Synod and to accompany the Archbishop of Goa during his visit.

Menezes soon met Arch deacon Geevarghese and demanded that the Malankara Church should absorb itself into the Roman Catholic Church. The Archdeacon called a meeting of the representatives at Angamaly, where it was decided that the church should not absorb itself into the Roman Church. The Arch deacon was threatened and compelled to accompany Menezes. They visited the churches together. Menezes tried to annex the churches into the Roman Church by threatening them. He influenced the Raja of Cochin who promised all necessary help to Menezes. It was decided to hold a meeting at Udayamperur, a place south of Ernakulam. The invitation letter was signed by both Menezes and the Arch deacon.



### **Synod of Diamper**

The Synod started at Udayamperur (Diamper) on 20<sup>th</sup> June 1599 and was attended by 153 clergy (Priests) and 660 laymen. Two hundred and sixty seven (267) Decrees (decisions) were already prepared by Menezes and were passed without holding any discussion. The St. Thomas Christians were forced to accept the faith and traditions of the Roman Church and the authority of the Pope. The Syrian Christians signed on the decrees fearing the Portuguese soldiers and the Raja of Cochin. The Synod ended on 26<sup>th</sup> June 1599. The decrees adopted by the Synod, mainly related to matters of faith, practices and administrative authority, viz. Holy Trinity, Incarnation, place of Holy Virgin Mary, Salvation, Purgatory, resurrection of the dead, last judgement, Invocation of the Saints, introduction of images, Rosary and supremacy of the Pope of Rome.

Besides, the participants were asked to swear by oath, obedience to the Pope of Rome. Another cruel decree was to handover to the Archbishop, all books written in Syriac. Instead of leavened bread, unleavened bread was used. Menezes travelled and visited all major churches

and collected all religious books and put them to flames.

Menezes arranged to use the corrected 'Qurbana Thaksa' in the churches. He held mass, baptized and gave confirmation to each of them. Satisfied that he brought the church of St. Thomas Christians to the obedience of Rome, Archbishop Menezes left Kerala on 16<sup>th</sup> November 1599 to Goa.

### **Malankara church under Catholic authority**

The major impact, however, of the Synod was the removal of the freedom of the Malankara Church and the Nestorian influence on the Malankara Church, the Latinisation and the imposition of Papal authority. Following the Synod of Diamper the Malankara Church virtually came under the administrative control of the Roman Catholic hierarchy for the next fifty four years (1599 – 1653). Three Jesuit Bishops namely, Francis Roz, Stephen de Britto and Francis Garcia were in position one after another representing the Pope. During this period, the Arch deacon Geevarghese died in 1637 and his nephew Thomas of Pakalomattom was appointed as the new Arch deacon in succession as the leader of the St. Thomas Christians.



## CLASS 6

---

### ***Verse for memorization:***

*“In the world you will have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world”.* Jn. 16: 33

### **I. Questions:**

- a. What are the changes Menezes wanted to adopt in the Malankara church?
- b. Explain the main decrees of the Synod of Diamper?
- c. What are the major impacts of the Synod of Diamper?
- d. Name three Jesuit Bishops appointed in the Malankara Church after the Synod of Diamper?

### **II. Fill in the blanks:**

- a. The Synod of Diamper started at Udayamperur on \_\_\_\_\_.
- b. Following the Diamper Synod, the Malankara Church came under the control of the Roman Catholic hierarchy for the next \_\_\_\_\_ years.

### **III. Activity**

- A. Discuss various churches of other denominations in and around your place. Also discuss how churches can work together in the present scenario?
- B. Find out, whether Malankara Church still follows the Eastern (Nestorian) tradition?

### **Prayer**

O Merciful Lord! We thank you and praise you for our Church and the Fathers who guided us from the beginning. We also submit and pray for all our Fathers who are guiding us today. Lead us from all kinds of persecutions and religious hatred. Help us to live according to your Divine call. Amen.



## LESSON 18

### COONEN CROSS OATH

#### **An unhappy community under the Catholic authority**

We have seen that after the Synod of Diamper, Malankara Church was under the control of the Roman Catholic hierarchy for 54 years (1599-1653). The St. Thomas Christians were very unhappy about the imposition of the Roman Catholic rule over them. They resisted the attempts to abolish the Syriac liturgy. They also resisted introduction of the Latin Liturgy, images in the churches etc. They longed to continue in the Eastern Syrian tradition.

#### **Arrival of Mar Ahatalla**

The Bishops from Persian Church used to visit Malankara. The Catholics did not want to continue this and they no longer allowed Bishops from Persia to land in Kerala. When Mar Ahatallah the Bishop from Persia landed at Surat in 1652 and then came to Mylapore, he was arrested by the Jesuits on 3<sup>rd</sup> August 1652.

While at Mylapore, Mar Ahatalla met two Syrian Christian deacons, viz; Chengannur Itty and Kuravilangad

Kizhakkedath Kurian, who were on a pilgrimage to the tomb of St. Thomas. Mar Ahatalla sent a letter through them to the Church of Malankara saying that he has been taken by the Portuguese as prisoner and soon they will make him leave for Cochin and then for Goa. In the same letter, Mar Ahatalla is also said to have appointed Archdeacon Thomas as the head of the Malankara Church. As feared, Mar Ahatalla was taken on board a Portuguese ship at Madras bound for Goa. On the way, it touched Cochin. The Syrian Christians heard of the arrival of the ship at Cochin. 25,000 strong St. Thomas Christians marched towards the Cochin harbor demanding the immediate release of their Metropolitan, Mar Ahatalla.. The Portuguese however rushed Mar Ahatalla to Goa, and it is said that on the way he was drowned to death.

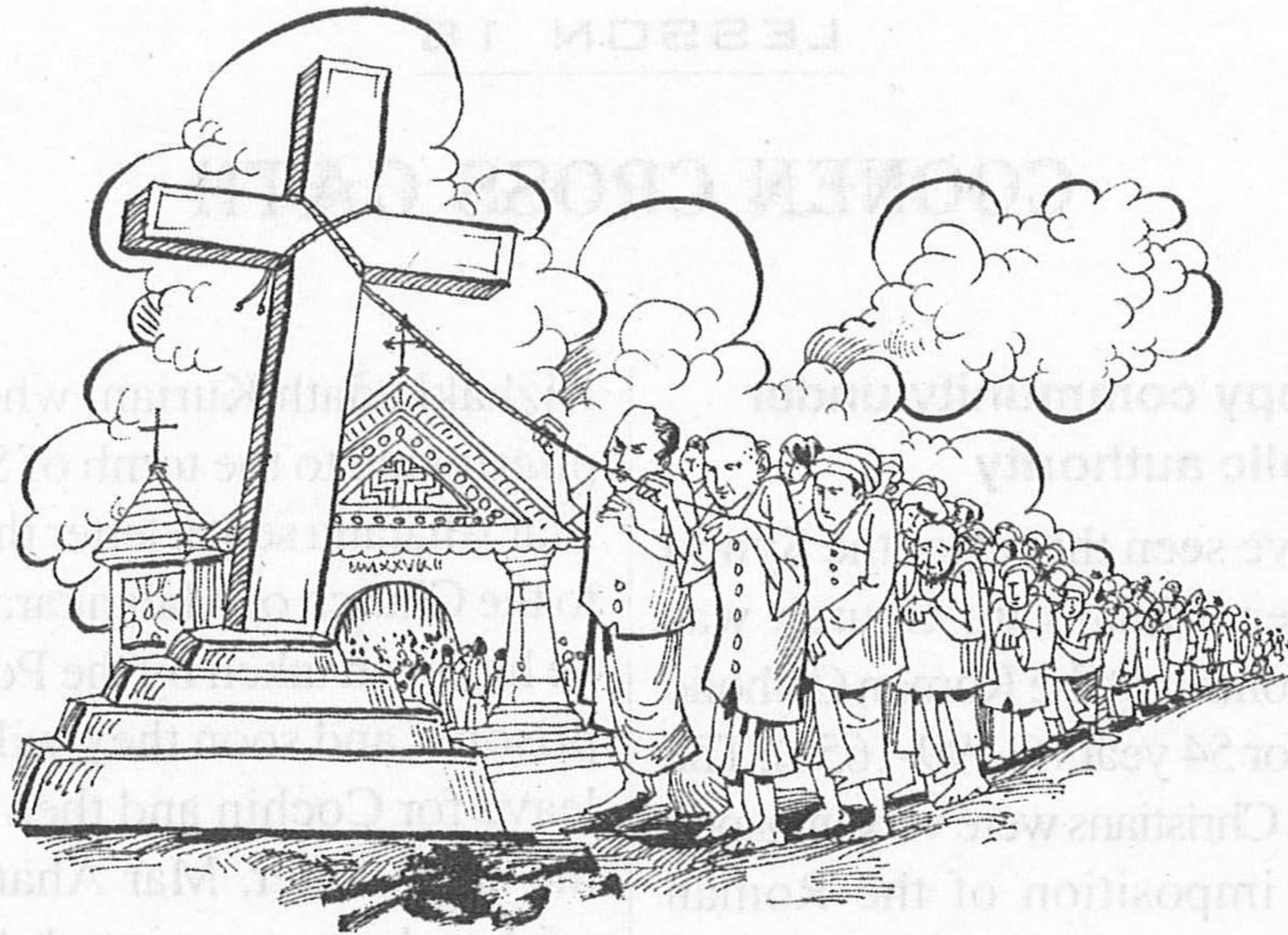
#### **Coonen Cross Oath**

When the St. Thomas Christians came to know that Mar Ahatallah was drowned, they were very much agitated. So, they assembled in thousands around



## CLASS 6

---



a big granite cross, the Koonen kurish (The Leaning Cross) in the Mattanchery parish church grounds near Cochin on January 16, 1653. They took an oath, saying that they shall no longer submit to the ecclesiastical authority of Rome and to obey none other than Arch Deacon Thomas. A large number of people had come to attend the oath, all could not touch the granite cross at the same time. Therefore, they held on to the ropes tied to the cross in all the directions. This event broke the 54 year old yoke of Roman supremacy imposed at the Diamper Synod of 1599. The Coonen Cross Oath was the proclamation of independence of the Malankara Church.

The aggrieved Christians assembled at Aalangad near Angamaly on May 22, 1653 and raised their leader Arch Deacon Thomas Parampil as the head of the church with the title of Mar Thoma- I on the strength of Mar Athallah's letter. It is said that during the consecration, 12 priests ordained him by laying their hands.

### **First Division – Romo Syrians 1663**

Meanwhile, the Dutch another maritime power of Europe came to Kerala and set up their establishments in Quilon, Kodungallur and Cochin. They ordered all foreign priests and monks in their jurisdiction to leave the country. Before leaving the shores of Cochin, Bishop Joseph



consecrated Chandy Kathanar of Pakalomattom family with the title Alexander de Campo on February 1, 1663 and he excommunicated Mar Thoma- I. This event led to the

division of Malankara Church into two. The group with Bishop Alexander came to be called Romo Syrians and the other with Mar Thoma- I, as Syrian Christians.

**Verse for memorization:**

*But I say to you who hear, "Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you". Lk. 6: 27*

**I. Answer the questions:**

- a. When and where was the Coonen Cross Oath held?
- b. What was the oath taken at Mattanchery?
- c. When did the first division occur ? Which were the two groups after the division?
- d. What is the importance of Coonen cross oath in the history of the Malankara Church?

**II. Match the following**

- |                            |   |                             |
|----------------------------|---|-----------------------------|
| a. Mar Ahatalla            | - | Arch Deacon Thomas Parampil |
| b. Coonen Cross Oath       | - | Bishop Alexander            |
| c. First Schism (division) | - | Syrian Metropolitan         |
| d. Mar Thoma I             | - | Mattanchery                 |
| e. Chandy Kathanar         | - | 1663                        |

**Prayer**

O Almighty God! Bless us and strengthen us to stand against all kinds of evil temptations in this world. Fill in us with your love and peace so that we may consider all humanity as your own creation. We submit ourselves as your instruments in this world. Amen.



## SACRAMENTS OF BAPTISM AND CONFIRMATION

Sacraments are the visible and symbolic acts of the Holy Mysteries through which a person receives the invisible grace of God which is essential for spiritual growth. Our church has seven important sacraments namely Baptism, Anointment with Holy Myron, Confession, Holy Communion, Marriage, Ordination and the Anointment of the sick.

### Sacrament of Baptism

A person is initiated to the Church through the sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation. Our Church gives baptism to infants as well as adults as per the necessity. The baptized person is confirmed in the faith of our Fathers along with his/her baptism. If it is an adult, he/ she will profess the faith during baptism whereas the God Father/ God Mother will confess the faith of the Church on behalf of a child. The

baptized will receive the Holy Communion (Qurbana) on the day of baptism and confirmation.

There is a difference between the Orthodox Church and other Churches as far as the confirmation and communion of a child is concerned. In the Catholic Church the above three sacraments - Baptism, Confirmation and Communion - will be given on three different occasions. First Communion is a big celebration in the life of a Catholic child. In major protestant Churches a child will be baptized as an infant, but he/ she will receive the Confirmation and Communion only as a teen-ager.

### Baptism of Infants

A series of questions are to be answered regarding the baptism of the infants. Even though these are to be discussed in detail, we will see them one after the other briefly:



### 1. Will Jesus accept children in the Kingdom of God?

The Gospels narrate us that Jesus was fond of children. One day some mothers came to Jesus with their small children. The disciples of Jesus did not permit them to approach Jesus, because the Lord was taking rest and because they thought the valuable time of Jesus should not be wasted for small children. But Jesus called them back and said; "Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the Kingdom of God belongs" (Mk. 10:14).

### 2. Can a small child receive the Holy Spirit?

Yes, of course. When we go through the Infancy Narratives of Jesus and John the Baptist we read how they were filled with the Holy Spirit while they were in their mother's womb (Mt. 1:18; Lk 1:15,41). God said to prophet Jeremiah; "before I formed you in the womb I knew you and before you were born I consecrated you" (Jer. 1:5).

### 3. Can the faith of a God Father/ God Mother save the child?

There are a couple of instances in the New Testament where we read that the faith of one person can bring blessings for another individual. The act of four people who carried the paralytic was impressive for Jesus and

he healed the man by appreciating the faith of the people who carried him (Mk 2:5). The daughter of the Canaanite woman (Mt. 15:28) and the servant of the Centurion were healed (Mt. 8:13) not because of the faith of the sick but due to faith of the mother and the master. St. Paul tells the Corinthians that even the unbelieving people will be saved through the faith of the believers (1 Cor 7:14-16).

### 4. Were children baptized in the Early Church?

Children were an essential part of the community in the Early Church. When Jesus fed five thousand people, he used the bread and fish carried by a child who accompanied his mother. Acts of the Apostles narrate a series of reports about the baptism of families. Among the early Christians the children in their families were baptized along with the adults. That is why St. Paul gave special advice to the children while he addressed the parents (Eph 6:1-3; Col 3:20-21).

### 5. Should a child wait for the Confirmation till he becomes an adult?

Our Church likes to admit the children as soon as possible. In a sense it is their birth right to inherit the Kingdom of God and they will be trained in the faith of our Fathers from



## CLASS 6

---

early childhood onwards. We do not want a child to remain non-Christian till his/her adolescence. Even the children who are ill and may die in their childhood will be under the protection and Grace of God because of their baptism.

### **Anointment with *Holy Myron*/ Sacrament of Confirmation**

The Anointment with Myron, also known as the Sacrament of Confirmation, is a holy occasion, on which we receive the seal of the Holy Spirit. The word 'Myron' is a Greek word which means 'ointment' or 'fragrant perfume'. Holy Myron will be anointed on every part of the child during the sacrament of confirmation. The baptized person receives it immediately after Baptism, so as to become a temple of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit aids him to grow in his spiritual life. Although it is received directly after Baptism, it is an independent Sacrament.

Anointing various parts of the body with the Myron oil denotes anointing the internal soul and its spiritual senses by the power of God to fight the hosts of evil and its power. This is because the Myron is the most powerful weapon against the devil and the best protection against sin and its seduction.

The Apostles of Christ granted this Sacrament by the laying of their hands after Baptism, as we read in the Book of Acts that St. Peter and St. John laid hands on the people of Samaria who were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, and thus received the Holy Spirit, (Acts 9:2-6).

The anointment with Holy Myron is a rich tradition of our Church, which we got from ancient Christianity. Dionysius Bar Salibi, a leading theologian of the ancient Syrian Church, has written a long treatise on the Holy Myron. There he says: "People may ask from where the tradition of the Myron has come down to us? We say: From the time of Moses. When God took him up to the mountain and taught him the mysteries of the Church, He also commanded him saying, "Take the finest aromatics: the flower of chosen Myron five hundred shekels, Cinnamon, Cassia and Olive oil etc. and make the oil of anointing, and you shall anoint the tent of the testimony, etc." (Ex.30:23-26).

St. Tertullian, another Father of the ancient Christianity has said: "In the Sacrament of Baptism the body is cleansed, so that the soul may be purified, and in the Sacrament of Anointment the body is anointed so that the soul may be



sanctified". Cyril of Jerusalem believed that "We also, after getting out of the Baptismal Font are granted the anointment officially as was Christ".

The consecration with the Myron Oil is an important occasion in our Church. It is the prerogative of the Catholicos to consecrate the Holy Myron and it will be kept under his safe custody at the Catholicate Palace. Each parish will get a small portion of it as per necessity. A lot of spices and perfumes will be added to pure oil. The filtered oil is then poured into a large

container and the Liturgy of the Sanctification of the Myron happens in the presence of the whole Church. For the consecration of the Myron oil the Catholicos, the chief celebrant, will prepare himself by fasting and praying for forty days. Normally the consecration takes place on the 40<sup>th</sup> day of the Great Lent so that not only the Catholicos, but the whole Church prepares for this holy event. The special liturgy of the consecration will be assisted by the bishops, twelve priests, twelve deacons and twelve sub-deacons.

### ***Verse for Memorization***

*"Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy that person. For God's temple is holy, and you are that temple". 1 Cor 3:17.*

### **1. Answer the Questions**

- a. Which are three sacraments the children receive at a stretch?
- b. What is the meaning of the word *Myron*?
- c. Who will consecrate the Holy Myron?
- d. Who was Dionysius Bar Salibi?
- e. Who is a god-father/ god-mother?

### **II. Fill up the blanks**

- a. Holy Myron will be anointed on \_\_\_\_\_ of a child during the sacrament of confirmation.



## CLASS 6

---

- b. The Catholicos and the Church will fast for \_\_\_\_\_ before the consecration of Holy Myron.
- c. Even unbelieving people will be blessed by the prayer of the \_\_\_\_\_.
- d. \_\_\_\_\_ describe the baptism of families.
- e. In the Sacrament of Anointment the body is anointed so that the \_\_\_\_\_.

### III. Write short notes

- a. What is the difference between the Churches regarding the sacrament of confirmation?
- b. How is the Holy Myron prepared and consecrated?
- c. Which are the important questions regarding Infant Baptism?

### IV. Activities

- A. Ask children to attend a baptism ceremony as a part of their learning. Each child can be given small assignments like numbering the anointments or checking where the Holy Myron will be kept in the Church or watching activities of the god-father.
- B. List out more questions regarding Infant baptism and try to answer them on the basis of the Bible and our prayers.
- C. Read Jn. 10:1-16. Who is the Good Shepherd mentioned here. What are the qualities of a Good Shepherd.

### Prayer

Lord we thank you for accepting us into your church. Help us to live a pure life. We praise you for all your blessings. Amen



LESSON 20

**HYMNS**

**KASOLIKKI (CATHOLIC HYMN)**

(Ampudayone Nin vathil)

Hearken gracious Lord we pray  
Haleluyyah-Ou-Haleluyyah  
Knocking at thy door, we say  
Barekmor, Kurie-laison.

*(O God of love, kindly listen the sound of your humble servant who knock at your door)*

Do not Thou deny our pleas  
Hale-luyya ou Hale-luyya  
Needy are Thy devotees  
Kurie-la-ison

*(Your devotees are in great need of your help. So do not reject the prayers of your servants)*

When chastizing us, O God.  
Hale-luyyah ou Hale-luyyah  
Spare us from thy wrath-ful rod  
Kurie-la-ison

*(When punishing be always kind, remove your anger and protect us)*

Open to us mercy's door  
Hale-luyyah ou Hale-luyyah  
Kindly hear as we implore  
Kurie-la-ison

*(O Lord please open your door. We may be rewarded by hearing our prayers)*

Hearken as we call to Thee  
Hale-luyyah ou Hale-luyyah  
Inn ourselves so frail are we  
Kurie-la-ison

*(O Lord listen when we call you, We are week. We want your help)*



## CLASS 6

Hear our Pray's for good art thou  
Hale-luyyah ou Haleluyyah  
Grant our needs  
Though great'e now  
Kurie-la-ison

Mercy grant, Lord mercy grant  
Hale-luyyah ou Hale-luyyah  
Thine abundant mercy grant  
Kurie-la-ison

Count not thou our evil deeds:  
Hale-luyyah ou Haleluyyah  
Kind one, who doth know our deeds  
Kurie-la-ison

*(O good God, kindly answer our prayers and grant our needs)*

*(O Lord by your mercy show compassion upon your servant)*

*(O God of grace, you know everything, do not remember our faults)*

## गीत

आगत तेरे द्वार पर है,  
करते बिनदी सेवक सारे  
द्वार न रहना बंद कभी तो, (2)  
हम कुछ न कुछ पाने के प्रार्थी।  
निज करूणा के अनुसृत ही तू,  
दंडित करना हम लोगों को,  
हमें बचाना क्रोध दंड से,  
आश्रय दाता है तू सबके,  
करते बिनती द्वार खोल दे।

प्रभु तु है करूणा सागर,  
पूरी कर दे मांग हमारी,  
नित लेते है नाम तुम्हारे,  
दुर्बलता सब आज मिटाकर,  
बने सहायक आर्त जनों का।

उत्तम गुण-गण भूषित प्रभुवर,  
बिनत हमारी वाणी सुन ले,  
बरसाकर, करूणाकण हम पर, (2)  
माँग हमारी पूरी कर ले।  
महिमान्वित प्रभु हम दासों पर,  
तेरी करूणा बरस पडे,  
तेरी करूणा का वह सागर (2)  
अत्यगाध और अति विस्तृत है।

किये है मैने पाप अनेक,  
उनका स्मरण, न करना तू,  
सर्व गुणों से विभूषित हे प्रभु,  
समता कौन करेगा जग में?  
बरसाकर करूणाकण हम पर।



## LESSON 21

# PRAYERS

### Before Meals

Make us worthy to praise and worship you for all the blessings, particularly this food which you have given us to eat and drink. Amen. (OR) Lord, for what we are about to receive from your precious bounty, we are truly thankful. In Jesus name, we pray, Amen.

### After Meals

We thank you, God, for your grace and blessings. We thank you for feeding us and satisfying us. We thank you because we live by eating and drinking from what you give us. Make us worthy to praise you and to do your will, now and for ever. Amen.

#### भोजन से पहले कि प्रार्थना

बारेकमोर, हे प्रभु, हमें तूने जो आहार दिया है उसके लिए और तेरी करुणा के लिए हम तेरी स्तुति और वंदना करते हैं। आमेन।

#### भोजन के पश्चात कि प्रार्थना

बारेकमोर, हे प्रभु, तेरी कृपा और आशीष के प्रति हम तेरी स्तुति करते हैं। हमें तेरा हित और स्तुति करने के लायक बनायें। आमेन।

### A Morning Prayer

It is good to give thanks to the Lord and to sing praise to your name, Most High; to proclaim your grace in the morning and your faithfulness in the night.

Lord, in the morning you shall hear my voice and in the morning I have prepared myself to appear before you. Lord, have compassion on your people. Lord, pardon and forgive the sins of all of us. Holy One, let your right hand rest upon us and pardon our infirmities, because your name is for ever.

#### प्रभात स्तुति

हे सर्वोच्च प्रभु! भला है तेरी स्तुति करना, भला है तेरे नाम का गुणगान करना, प्रातः तेरी करुणा तथा रात में तेरी सच्चाई घोषित करना। हे प्रभु! प्रातः मेरा स्वर सुने। प्रातः मैं सजकर तेरे सम्मुख खड़ा होऊँ। प्रभु! अपनी जनता पर करुणा करे। हम सब को पापमोचन दे। हे पवित्र प्रभु! अपना दायँ हाथ उठाकर हमें आशिष दे। तेरे पवित्र नाम के निमित्त हमारे पाप-रोगों को चंगा कर दे।



## LESSON 22

## ST. IGNATIUS OF ANTIOCH

Ignatius, one among the Apostolic Fathers was born around 50 AD and died during the Persecution of the Church (98-117 AD). He was the third Bishop and the Patriarch of Antioch and was possibly a student of John the Apostle and St. Polycarp was his colleague. The writers of the early centuries depict him as the child whom the Savior held in His arms and blessed, as described in Mk. 9:37. As per this incident the writers of the early centuries called him *theophoros*, which means one who is carried by God.

**A true Christian**

The character of St. Ignatius, as deduced from his own and the writings of his contemporaries, is that of a true athlete of Christ. The triple honor of apostle, bishop, and martyr was well merited by this energetic soldier of the Faith. His enthusiastic devotion to duty, passionate love of sacrifice, and an utter

fearlessness in the defense of Christian truth were his chief characteristics.

He was ever vigilant about his people lest they be infected by the rampant heresies of those early days. He prayed for them, that their faith and courage may not be wanting in the hour of persecution. He was exhorting them constantly to unflinching obedience to their bishops. He had all the sterling qualities of an ideal pastor and a true soldier of Christ. When the Church was persecuted by Emperor Domitian was vigilant and he inspired his people with hope. Associated with the writings of St. Ignatius is a work called "*Martyrium Ignatii*", which purports to be an account of the martyrdom of St. Ignatius and the incidents leading up to it by eyewitnesses.

**Died for faith**

Emperor Trajan decreed that the Christians should unite with their pagan



neighbors in the worshipping of the gods. A general persecution was threatened, and death was named as the penalty for all who refused to offer the prescribed sacrifice. Instantly alert to the imminent danger, Ignatius availed himself of all the means within his reach to thwart the purpose of the emperor. The success of his zealous efforts did not remain hidden for long from the Church's persecutors. He

*St. Ignatius is claimed to be the first known Christian writer to argue in favor of Christianity's replacement of the 'Sabbath' with the Lord's Day*

*He is also responsible for the first known use of the Greek word **katholikos**, meaning "universal," "complete" and "whole" to describe the church, "Wherever the bishop appears, there let the people be; as wherever Jesus Christ is, there is the catholic Church.", (Letter to the Smzrnaeus ).*

was soon arrested and brought before Trajan, who was then sojourning in Antioch. Accused by the emperor himself of violating the imperial

edict, and of inciting others to like transgressions, Ignatius valiantly bore witness to the faith of Christ.

He was sentenced to die in the Colosseum, to be eaten by lions. Along the route he wrote six letters to the churches in the region and one to a fellow bishop.

After St. Ignatius' martyrdom his mortal remains were honorably carried back to Antioch by his companions. Later on Emperor Theodosius II transferred them to the Temple of Tyche which was converted into a church dedicated to Ignatius. In 637 the relics were taken to the Church of St Clement



*Icon of martyrdom of Ignatius of Antioch*



## CLASS 6

in Rome. The feast of Ignatius is observed on 17 October.

### The Epistles of Ignatius

The writings of Ignatius are valuable for understanding the faith of the Apostolic Church. The important topics addressed in these letters include the meaning of the Church, the sacraments and the role of bishops.

1. Letter to the Ephesians
2. Letter to the Magnesians
3. Letter to the Trallians
4. Letter to the Romans
5. Letter to the Philadelphians
6. Letter to the Smyrnaeans
7. Letter to (a fellow Bishop)

### Important Quotations from St. Ignatius

The writings of St. Ignatius have laid the foundation for the development of Orthodox Theology. Following are some of the most important quotations of St. Ignatius:

*Eucharist* - "Eucharist is the medicine of immortality and an antidote against death" (*Letter to the Ephesians*).

- "the Eucharist is the flesh of our Savior Jesus Christ, flesh which

### *Most famous quotation of St. Ignatius*

*(in letter to the Romans)*

*I am writing to all the Churches and I enjoin all, that I am dying willingly for God's sake, if only you do not prevent it. I beg you, do not do me an untimely kindness. Allow me to be eaten by the beasts, which are my way of reaching to God. I am God's wheat, and I am to be ground by the teeth of wild beasts, so that I may become the pure bread of Christ.*

suffered for our sins and which our Father, in his goodness, raised up again." (*Letter to the Smyrnaeans*)

*Sunday* - "If then those who had walked in ancient practices attained unto newness of hope, no longer observing Sabbaths but fashioning their lives after the Lord's day, on which our life also arose through Him ... how shall we be able to live apart from Him?..."- (*Letter to the Magnesians*)

The prayerful life and strong faith of St. Ignatius is a leading light to all the Christians.



**Verse for memorization:**

“Whoever welcomes in my name one of these children, welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me welcomes not only me but also the one who sent me” Mk. 9: 37.

**I. Answer the questions:**

- a. Who was Ignatius of Antioch?
- b. How did Ignatius die?
- c. What is the significance of the Letters of St. Ignatius?

**II. Fill in the blanks:**

- a. Ignatius was carried by our Lord and therefore he is known as \_\_\_\_\_.
- b. \_\_\_\_\_ is the description about the martyrdom of Ignatius.
- c. St. Ignatius and St. Polycarp were fellow students of \_\_\_\_\_.

**III. Activities:**

- A. Find out the names of the Churches from the first three chapters of the Book of Revelation, to whom St. Ignatius wrote letters.
- B. Write down the famous quotations of St. Ignatius on chart papers and fix them on the walls of the class room.
- C. Find out where St. Ignatius is remembered in the Holy Qurbana.
- D. Discuss the life of St. Ignatius. Each student may share what inspires him/her from the life of St. Ignatius

**Prayer**

Ask the students to make prayer by themselves. The students may think for a while about their life, any sins that they might have committed or any person, events they need to remember in their prayer.



## LESSON 23

# ST. IRENÆUS OF LYONS

We learnt about Apologists in the previous years' lessons. Apologists were group of Fathers who lived in the second and third centuries and defended the faith of Christianity against the heretics. St. Irenaeus of Lyons was a prominent figure among the Apologists of the Early Church. He was a disciple of Polycarp, who was said to be a disciple of John the Evangelist, and a friend of St. Ignatius of Antioch. The Greek word *Irenaios* means *the one who maintains peace*.

Irenaeus was a Greek by birth from the town of Smyrna in Asia Minor and he was reared in a Christian family unlike many of his contemporaries, who became converts as adults. He was a priest at a place called Lyon, in Gaul (today's France) during the persecution of Marcus Aurelius, the Roman Emperor from 161-180 CE. Later on he became the bishop of Lyon. During the religious peace which followed the persecution of Marcus Aurelius, the new bishop divided his activities

between the duties of a pastor and a missionary.

The date of Irenaeus' death is not known, which must have occurred at the end of the second or the beginning of the third century. He was buried under the Church of Saint John in Lyons, which was later renamed after St Irenaeus in his honour. Irenaeus is recognized as a saint by both the Eastern Orthodox Church and the Roman Catholic Church. His feast is celebrated on August 23 in the Eastern Orthodox Church.

### **Irenaeus, a true Apologist**

Apologists were Christian theologians, who refuted the heretical teachings and defended the true faith of the Early Church. The writings of Irenaeus were directed against a heresy called Gnosticism, which was a big threat to Christianity during the first three centuries. The Gnostics maintained false teachings about the salvation of mankind, role of the Church and the message of the four Gospels. As one of the first great



Christian theologians, Irenaeus emphasized the traditional elements in the Church, especially the Episcopate, Scripture, and Tradition. Among many heretical teachings the Gnostics believed that they possessed a special knowledge about the salvation from Jesus himself just like some protestant pastors do today. Irenaeus rejected this categorically. His best-known book,



*Adversus Haereses* or *Against Heresies* is a detailed attack on Gnosticism and its various teachings as well as the moral degradation of that heretical sect.

### **The Authority of the Bishop**

Irenaeus is also known as one of the first theologians to use the principle of apostolic succession to refute his opponents. Apostolic Succession is a theological teaching of the Early Church, which maintains that only the bishops who succeed the Apostles through a valid ordination are eligible for leading the Church.

Irenaeus wrote that the only way for Christians to retain unity was to humbly accept one doctrinal authority of the episcopal councils. Against the Gnostics, who claimed a secret knowledge from Jesus himself, Irenaeus maintained that one who wants to learn the real commandments of our Lord has to get it from the bishop. They are the ones who succeed the Apostles, who accompanied Jesus Christ and received His teachings directly.

### **The Four Gospels and the Four Animals**

Irenaeus pointed to Scripture as a proof of orthodox Christianity against heresies. Before Irenaeus, Christians



## CLASS 6

---

differed as to which gospel they preferred. The Christians of Asia Minor preferred the Gospel of John, whereas the Gospel of Matthew was the most popular overall. Irenaeus asserted that all four Gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, were canonical scriptures. Just to signify the content of each Gospel he gave a symbolical figure to each taking the four animals from the vision of prophet Ezekiel:

1. The Lion symbolizes the Gospel according to Matthew, because it tells us about the royal Son of God.
2. The Bull represents the Gospel of Mark, which contains details about the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.
3. The figure of a Human Being was given for the third Gospel, because it describes the human nature of Jesus.
4. The Eagle is the symbol of the Gospel according to John, which

### ***Verse for memorization***

*“Even if we or an angel from heaven should proclaim to you a gospel against what has been preached to you, let that one be accursed”.*  
Galatians 1:8.

denotes the gift of the Holy Spirit flying over the Church.

Irenaeus is also our earliest attestation that the Gospel of John was written by John the apostle and that the Gospel of Luke was written by Luke, the companion of Paul.

### **Irenaeus and the *Gospel of Judas***

The teachings of St. Irenaeus is relevant even today in our faith about the Gospels. He denied the contents of the *Gospel of Judas*, which became a sensation in modern literary market. Irenaeus rejected the authenticity and authority of the Gospel of Judas in which Jesus asked Judas to betray him. For example, he wrote: “They declare that Judas the traitor was thoroughly acquainted with these things, and that he alone, knowing the truth as no other did, accomplished the mystery of betrayal; by him all things were thus thrown into confusion. They produce a fictitious history of this kind, by which they fashion the Gospel of Judas.”



**I. Answer the Following questions**

- a. Who were the Apologists?
- b. What was Gnosticism?
- c. Name the animals which represent the Gospels.
- d. What is Apostolic Succession?

**II. Fill in the blanks**

- a. The Greek word *Irenaeus* means \_\_\_\_\_.
- b. Irenaeus was a priest of \_\_\_\_\_ during the persecution of \_\_\_\_\_.
- c. \_\_\_\_\_ was the most famous book of Irenaeus of Lyons.
- d. \_\_\_\_\_, the sensation of modern literary market, was rejected by Irenaeus in his writings.
- e. The Feast of Irenaeus is celebrated on \_\_\_\_\_.

**III. Activities**

- A. Find out five similarities between Ignatius of Antioch and Irenaeus of Lyons.
- B. Prepare a small skit to explain the meaning of the four Gospels of the New Testament.

**Prayer**

Lord we thankfully remember the sufferings our fathers have faced for the cause of faith. Lord hold us in the true faith. give us strength to live in your way and spend the word of your love to others.



## LESSON 24

# VATTASSERYL THIRUMENI

During the Holy Liturgy of our Church, we remember 23 Holy fathers who lived within the first six centuries, Saint Gregorios of Parumala and Vattasseryl Geevarghese Mar Dionysius and among them. Vattasseryl Thirumeni was a great father of our own land and an architect of the church. He is honored as '**Sabha Bhasuran** (*man of brilliance and heroism*). Vattasseril Thirumeni was a man of prayer, determination and dynamism. He was a saint who never stooped before falsehood.

The present generation, busy in 'high tech' may be less interested or have less time to go through church history. But it is the duty of every Indian Orthodox Christian to pass on such knowledge to all the generations. To live as true Christians and to Praise God are today's primary requirements. The knowledge about the life of our Holy fathers will guide us to achieve this goal.

### **Vattasseryl Thirumeni – Life in Brief**

As per the family history of Vattasseryl , it is a branch of the

Pakalomattom family which accepted Christianity from St.Thomas. Thirumeni was the fifth son of Joseph and Aleyamma. Thirumeni acquired his initial education through a preceptor and did middle school education at C.M.S school Mallappally. He joined C.M.S school Kottayam for High School education. Before completing high school, he was ordained as a deacon by the Patriarch Peter III (the first Patriarch of Antioch to visit India) in 1876 at Puthuppally Church. He was given priesthood by Saint Gregorios of Parumala (1880). When he was made a Ramban in 1903, He was actively involved in the day-to-day affairs of the church.

### **The church of St. Thomas in Malankara**

We have already learnt the history of Malankara Church from the arrival of St. Thomas in A.D.52 . The metropolitan (ArchDeacon) of the Malankara church was known as Archdeacon of India. The church of St.Thomas was comparatively peaceful, very much secular and



indigenized till the interference of the Portuguese, Jesuit and Carmelite missions. The Portuguese tried to bring the Malankara church under the Catholic fold. Nazrani community resisted this move through the 'Coonan cross' oath.

Henceforth the Malankara Metropolitan, Marthoma I performed the Episcopal functions along with a church council presided over by him. But the consecration was incomplete as per the Nicaea synod decisions. Marthoma I requested the Patriarch of Jerusalem, Antioch and Alexandria to send a Bishop to Malankara. The authentic Episcopal consecration of Marthoma I was fulfilled by the arrival of Mar Gregorios of Jerusalem in 1665 who was under the Patriarch of Antioch.. Marthoma I was succeeded by Marthoma II to Marthoma IX followed by Mar Dionysius II to Mar Dionysius IV, Mathews Mar Athanasios, Thomas Mar Athanasios, Pulikkot Mar Dionysius and Vattasseryl Mar Dionysius.

### **Vattasseryl Thirumeni : from conservation to excommunication**

Vattasseryl Thirumeni took over as the Malankara Metropolitan at a typical juncture. The Patriarchs of Antioch

were trying to control the Malankara church. Mar Abdulla Patriarch arrived Kerala in 1909. With the support of a group of people Patriarch started visiting different churches, conducted meetings in the churches and took decisions in his favor to have whole authority over the Malankara Church.



Vattasseryl Thirumeni was not ready to surrender the church to the Patriarch. Finally in 1911 Vattasseryl Thirumani was excommunicated by the Patriarch, and Malankara church split into two groups; one supporting methran (Vattsseryl Thirumeni), other



## CLASS 6

---

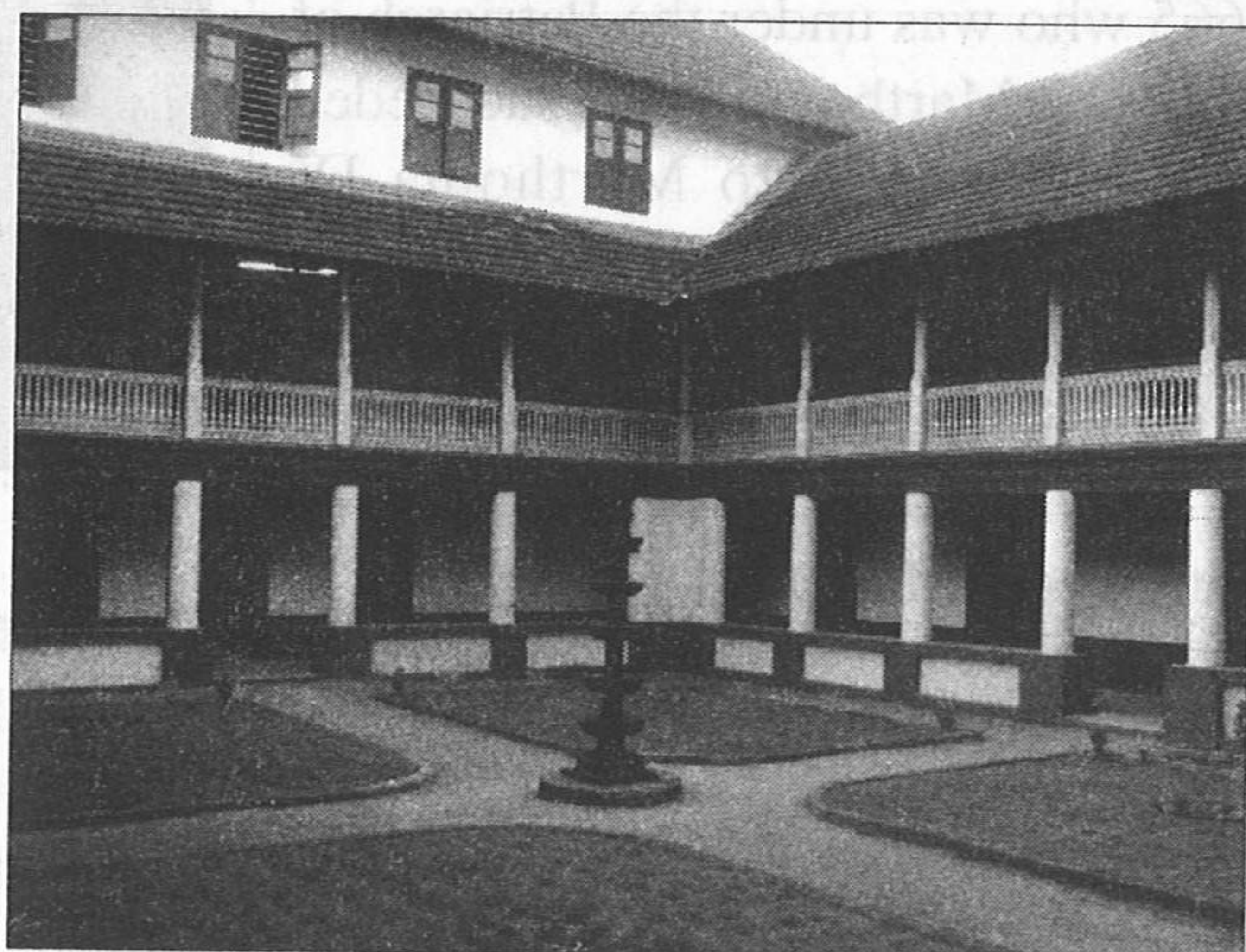
supporting Patriarch. It is sad to recollect that a Patriarch who stayed in Malankara for a year could not do any thing for the spiritual growth of the church, but split it. The excommunication did not have proper reason and was against canon rules. Hearing the news, the senior Patriarch, Abdul Missih from Antioch instantly intimated the invalidity of the excommunication.

### Later developments

Vattasseryl Thirumeni with the help of the faithful brought the senior Patriarch of Antioch, Abdul Missih to Malankara and established the Catholicate in Malankara (in 1912).

Murimattathil Mar Ivanios Bishop was consecrated as the first Catholicos.

Even after the establishment of catholicate in Malankara, Vattasseryl Thirumeni was ready to accept Patriarch conditionally. He honestly tried to reconcile with Patriarch in line with Hoodaya Canon. But the Patriarch was not ready to bring peace in the Malankara Church until he got the temporal authority over the Church. A fearful situation arose in Malankara, many churches and Institutions were closed because of the fight between two groups. The problems continued for long till the Supreme court made its verdict in favour of Orthodox Church. During the



*Views of Orthodox Theological Seminary, Kottayam (Old Seminary)*

*Founded in 1815*



cross examinations of the cases Thirumeni proved his intelligence, knowledge in the history of the church and canons. His measured statements and replies even amused the Judges.

### **Few Achievements**

It is difficult to segregate few achievements from the life of this great person. The ruling passion in his life was liberation of the church from foreign hands. After prolonged legal battle, he won the cases thereby winning autocephalous status for the church. He established the Catholicate in Malankara which has ecclesiastical

*( Hoodaya Canon, compiled by Bar Hebrews ,the Catholicose of Tikrit in thirteenth century ; is the summary all early synods to which all the eastern churches are bound to. Hoodaya Canon clearly defines the relation between Patriarch and Catholicos is of mutual respect and co-existence).*

rank equal to that of Patriarch. Now the Malankara church need not implore Patriarchates of any other place for Bishops or visit any of these places for the consecration of Bishops.

The Constitution of the church was prepared after long and thoughtful discussions during Thirumeni's time. The constitution clearly defines faith, practice and all other aspects related to the church. Having a constitution of it's own was another landmark in the history of this 20 century old church. The church synod accepted the constitution in 1934 which was later accepted by Patriarch also.

The Malankara Orthodox church achieved greater stability under it's own catholicate and constitution. All the splits in the church (such as to the Roman Catholic, the CMS, the Thozhiyoor church, the YuYomaya Revival group, the Marthoma church and the Malankara catholic church) were due to the absence of a constitution of it's own and an autocephalous status. It deserves special mention that the church did not face any split after the period of Vattasseryl Thirumeni.

Thirumeni's farsight brought the present status to the church. Now the church is actively participating in many national and international forums.

During his priestly days when he was teaching in the Seminary, he wrote the Book Mathopadesa Sarangal (Basic Doctrines of Religion) which reflects



## CLASS 6

---

the faith of a Christian, such as teaching of the Church concerning God, the Sacraments, Prayer, Fasting, Man and his Salvation and similar subjects

His achievements are innumerable in the field of education, building hostels, mission work, sreebadasa samootham, work for outside Kerala Diocese, student movement and many more.

### **A Saint with a strong will power**

The only driving force at every turn in his life was blessings from God. His constant prayers and interaction with God helped him escape from many dangers. Many times there were attempts to kill him. The living God saved him from the rebel's deathtraps. Only saints have such experiences. Everyone who had personal experiences of Thirumeni depicted

him as a Saint. After excommunication, he spent two months at Parumala Seminari in lent and prayers before visiting the Patriarch in Mardin.

Though opponent bishops search for loopholes to trap him, Thirumeni gave them high respect as bishops. Many occasions proved his high moral values, strong Christian ideals, open heartedness and the nobility of his mind to love his enemies. His Grace left for heavenly abode on 23<sup>rd</sup> Feb.1934. He was entombed at Old Seminary, Kottayam. He was proclaimed as a Saint by the Holy Episcopal Synod of the Malankara Church on 23<sup>rd</sup> Feb. 2003. 'Even his enemies can't say there is something which defile his life': these are words from a newspaper editorial after His demise, which is correct in every sense.

### ***Verse For Memorization***

*For the Lord loves what is right and does not abandon his faithful people. He protect them forever but the descendants of the wicked will be driven out.*  
Ps. 37:28

### **I. Answer the following Questions**

- a. Who are the Saints canonized by the Indian Orthodox Church?
- b. What are achievements for the during the time of Vattasseryl Thirumeni.
- c. Name the first Catholicos of the Indian Orthodox Church (The Malankara Sabha).



- d. Write a short note on the importance of Vattasseryl Thirumeni in the history of Malankara Church

## II. Activity

- A. Put the following events in Chronological Order

- Coonen Cross Oath
- Establishment of the Catholicate in Malankara
- Mulanthuruthy Synod
- Synod of Diamper
- Canonisation of Vattasseryl Thirumeni

- B. Quiz:

- a. Name the diocese to which you belong to.
- b. Name the present Catholicos of the East
- c. Who is the present Malankara Metropolitan
- d. Name your diocesan Bishop
- e. Who is the Regional Director of OSSAE (OKR)
- f. Who is the president of OSSAE
- g. Where is the Headquarters of the Indian Orthodox Church?

## Prayer

Our merciful Lord, we thank you for guiding us through our parents teachers and church fathers. Lord help us to hold the truth and stand for the true faith in you. Lord help the church to overcome all the evil interferences. Always lead us with your Holy Spirit. Amen.



LESSON 25**CHRISTIAN RESPONSE  
TO POVERTY****Poverty; the biggest Social  
Challenge in India**

The biggest social challenge of the world is poverty; 1.2 billion people of the world are having a sub-standard living. They are not able to manage food, clothing and shelter, the minimum requirements for the sustenance of life. The price of the essential goods is increasing at an alarming speed. Due to Globalization the gap between the rich and poor is widening; the rich become richer and the poor become poorer.

The World Bank estimates that 456 million Indians (42% of the total Indian population) now live under the global poverty line of \$1.25 per day. This means that a third of the global poor now reside in India. According to an estimation of the Planning Commission of India 27.5% of the population was living below the

poverty line in 2004–2005. India has a higher rate of malnutrition among children under the age of three (46% in the year 2007) than any other country in the world. The number of deaths of infants and women increase day by day in rural areas. Farmers commit suicide in Indian villages, because they are under heavy debt and the yield of agriculture is insufficient to feed their family members. Due to the economic recession more and more people are losing jobs around the world.

**Sin of being rich in a poor world**

There can be various reasons for a person to become poor. Some people are born poor while some others are made poor by the society. Lack of education makes a man poor, because he can not get a decent job and sufficient wealth. Since the



population of a country like India is increasing and since its resources are limited it is very difficult for everybody to find a job. Natural calamities like flood and earth quake will compel many people to leave their home land and to roam around. Thus poverty occurs from natural and causes like physical and mental disability of an individual to political reasons like unjust distribution of land and wealth. As followers of Christ we are called to understand the reasons for poverty and to do whatever

we can for the betterment of the people who are poor, unemployed, sick and suffering.

### Different facets of Poverty

We always feel that lack of food is known as poverty. This concept has changed. Poverty can take different forms: lack of food, lack of housing, lack of clothing, lack of education, isolation, inaccessibility social facilities and health facilities, lack of freedom etc. are different forms of poverty.





## CLASS 6

---

H.G.Dr.Geevarghese Mar Osthathios, the senior most bishop of our Church, is the one who always speaks about the issues like poverty. In his opinion the very existence of the rich in a poor world is a sinful thing. He may not be doing anything wrong against the poor. But simply to live among the poor is a sin in his understanding. In one of his books he quotes an imaginary dialogue mentioned in a homily written by St. John Chrysostom of the fourth century, which goes as follows:

“Tell me where did your wealth come from?”

“From my grandfather and my father”

“Would you be able to go back in your family and show that the acquisition was just? No, you couldn't. In the beginning, the sources must be from someone's injustice. Where did it come from? From the beginning did God make one rich and another poor? Did he guide one and show him many treasures of gold, but deprived the other one of the share? No, he provided the same earth to all. Since it was common property how is it that you have so many acres, while your neighbours do not have a spoonful of earth?”

### How can we address the problem of poverty?

There are different approaches to support the poor of our society:

1. Just to pray for the alleviation of poverty is an escapism. We should do whatever we can for the poor.

2. Almsgiving is the simplest and easiest way to help the poor. It is the minimum that all people do and they think that by throwing a coin in to a begger's bowl is a big charity. The Letter of St. James highlights the need for social justice; showing favouritism to the rich and the powerful and to sideline the poor is a sin (Jam 2: 1-7).

3. Giving tithes to the support of poor people has a history from the Old Testament times. If you are able to separate one tenth of all your income and to use it only for helping the poor like orphans and the sick, you will get happiness along with the person who receives your gift.

4. Living and fighting for the upliftment of the poor and the sidelined is a difficult way, but it was the option of Jesus. As true Christians we are called to love the poor and to do whatever we can for their upliftment. More and more people should go to the villages to educate the



poor and to run health care centres for the downtrodden.

5. As children we should try to understand the struggles of the poor people. Weekly fasting will teach us

the pain of hunger and thirst. Gradually we should keep ourselves away from the luxuries of our life. Sharing all our resources with the needy is what God expects from us.

### ***Verse for memorization***

*“Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest” (Mt. 11:28).*

### **1. Answer the following questions**

- Which are the basic needs of a human being?
- Name the fourth century Father who taught about social justice.
- What is the teaching of Mar Osthathios regarding the rich and poor?

### **II. Fill up the blanks:**

- The World Bank estimates that \_\_\_\_\_ Indians live under the poverty line.
- The rate of malnutrition of the children was \_\_\_\_\_ in 2007.
- Due to the \_\_\_\_\_ more and more people lose their jobs.
- \_\_\_\_\_ increases the gap between the rich and the poor.

### **III. Write short paragraphs:**

- What are the basic reasons for poverty?
- Which are the ways to help the poor of the world?



## CLASS 6

---

### IV. Activities

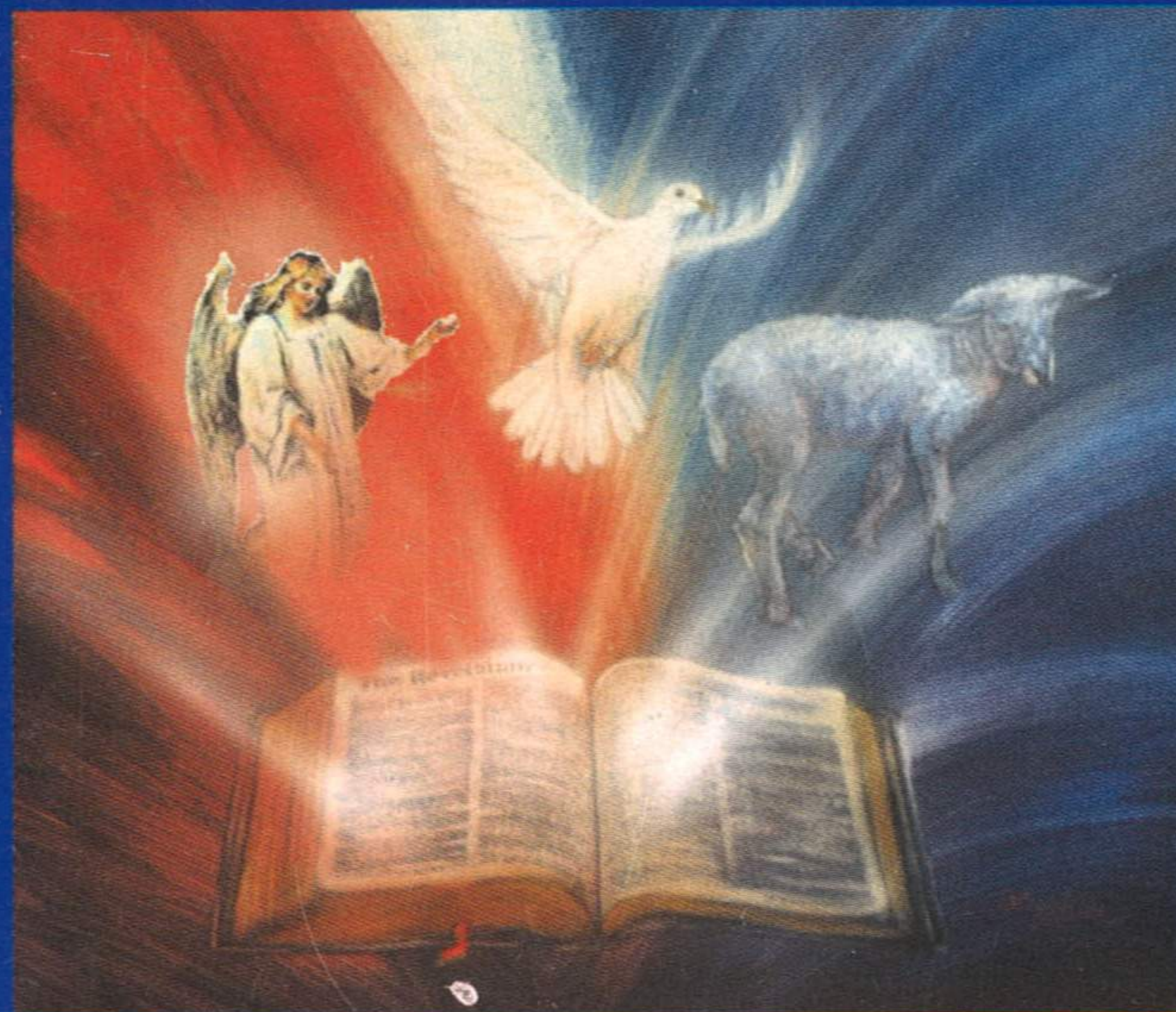
- a) Ask the children to bring either a book or a cassette/ CD with the sermons of H.G.Mar Osthathios and help the children understand any of his points regarding the poor.
- b) Arrange a visit to a slum or a thickly populated street or an orphanage so that the children watch the difficulties of poor people.

### Prayer

Lord we thank and praise you for giving us an opportunity to learn more in your name in this sundayschool year. Lord help us to walk in the right path. Help us to use the knowledge we gained for the glory of your name and betterment of others. Lord guide us to always remain in true faith and bring others to you.

(make special prayers for your friends, family members, teachers, sundayschool, church and for the place you live and our country)





OSSAE (OKR)  
CLASS 6 TEXT BOOK